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The human factor in capacity-building for development

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

The present note by the Secretariat has been prepared on the basis of an outline provided by the members of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration. The Committee adopted the theme of the human factor in capacity-building for development, as the main agenda item for its eighth session (see Economic and Social Council decision 2008/254). The present note has been prepared to establish the understanding that people matter most in development because they are its beneficiaries as well as its architects. This is the crux of the human factor in capacity-building for development. Building institutional and human capacities to enable public servants to sustain development through effective delivery of services to all must be taken seriously. Governments must manage their public services through human resources management regimes that can best attract a fair share of the best talent, motivate personnel, encourage learning new and effective ways of service delivery, and sustain continuous capacity development to keep pace with demands for better, faster and more equitable service delivery. The public service needs to pay particular attention to strengthening technical capacity in the various areas of service delivery, including information and communications technology, finance, accounting and environment management. However, Governments also need to enhance the leadership capacity of public servants, which is necessary for harmonious, equitable and peaceful development.

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Equality and respect for diversity must be a cherished virtue within the public sector. Structures, systems and practices that encourage citizens' engagement in the processes of governance and public administration must be promoted within the public service. The public service needs to be conversant with the application of modern information and communications technology and knowledge management in order to serve people in this information age. Management development institutes, universities and other tertiary institutions need to be strengthened to sustain efforts towards developing the capacity of the current and future public service. Human resources managers in the public sector must possess the requisite competences to be champions, experts and agents of transformation so as to sustain capacity development in the public service.

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I. Introduction

1. Achieving national development objectives and the internationally agreed development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals, requires that countries have the capacity to produce and provide public services in the right quantity and quality and ensure fair, just, affordable and equitable access to them for all. This is the critical function of human resources in the public service in every country. Other capacities required for development cannot be built without the intervention of the human resources to articulate them in capacity-building institutional arrangements, policies, strategies and programmes. Countries need to assess the development challenges that confront them and determine the human resources management regimes as well as the nature, levels and quality of human talent required to meet such challenges. The present note focuses on the human resources in the public service which are critical for countries to achieve development successfully. Emphasis is put on (a) attracting and retaining a fair share of the best talent in the public service, (b) innovations in selection and recruitment that could improve talent in the public service, (c) equality and diversity, (d) pay reforms, (e) leadership and human resources capacity development, (f) e-learning, (g) civic engagement, (h) transparency, accountability and citizen trust in Government, and (i) knowledge management. It must be understood that in developing the capacity of public servants, efforts should also include strengthening the institutions, structures, processes and legal frameworks through which they work.

II. Matching human resources management regimes, critical functions, talent and challenges

2. Public service authorities in different countries must find the human resources management regime most suitable for providing the best support to manage the talent in the public sector for the achievement of the development agenda. Human resources regime here is understood as the complete spectrum of human resources management in terms of its policies, strategies, systems, structures, roles and responsibilities, planning, programmes, implementation and evaluation, including remuneration, motivation and discipline within the values and principles of the public service. Some countries would prefer the "career system" for public servants. Others would prefer the "job system". Between the two there is room for creativity and hybrid systems that suit specific situations, needs and preferences for any country. The guiding principle would be to look at the gamut of the development agenda of the country and assess which human resources regime would enable a country to attract, develop, retain and manage talent to achieve the objectives of the agenda. For some jobs, time-bound contracts may be offered to the most qualified individuals with sufficient incentives to motivate them to maximize performance. For others, career appointments with appropriate brands of performance assessment and appraisals, together with incentive schemes to sustain motivation, may be more suitable. Career regimes for all jobs in the public service may not be the best mechanism to attract and motivate a fair share of the best talent in the public service.

3. Different countries are faced with different challenges. However, in a general way, many of the challenges are related to issues of globalization, rapid

technological changes, unprecedented demand for democratization, decentralization, transparency and accountability, conflict and crisis. In order to develop the requisite human resources in the public sector to address the current and future challenges posed by the imperatives of development, countries must be clear on which human resources in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, networks and technological know-how they need and the management regimes through which such human resources can be managed. What talent and which public sector human resources management regime is most appropriate depends on the country and situation being considered. Generally, the talent needed may include:

(a) Capable and committed public service leadership at all levels that has a vision and that can inspire the public service and the population and adapt to any situation;

(b) Knowledgeable, skilled and committed policy advisers to provide policy and strategy, creatively develop the long-term goals of society and nations, and forecast and anticipate future trends and rapidly changing global and local conditions;

(c) Human resources management professionals to execute the human resources management function, including forecasting, planning, personnel records, human resources data and information processing, and human resources development, including training and succession planning;

(d) Knowledgeable, skilled and ethical financial and other resource managers to manage public service with responsiveness, transparency, accountability, ethics and integrity;

(e) Knowledgeable and skilled knowledge and information managers to provide systems, processes and practices of information management that can make available timely, accurate, well-organized and accessible information for effective forecasting, planning, monitoring, and evaluation of the public service;

(f) Public servants who cherish professionalism, the values and virtues of service and the general interest;

(g) Public servants who are knowledgeable, skilled and committed in executing functions related to ensuring law and order, justice, audit and administrative control.

However, the public service as an institution must adopt positive values, codes of conduct and a professional ethos to guide the behaviour of public servants. Human resources management professionals must be supported by systems and practices that sustain human resources development strategies and the development of the public service as a learning organization.

A. Attracting and retaining a fair share of the best talent in the public service: a strategic perspective

4. Attracting and retaining a fair share of the best talent in the public service is a strategic matter requiring, first, an analysis of the internal and external environment of the public service to determine the current and future supply and demand of talent in light of the development challenges facing public service. A number of questions need to be addressed:

(a) What talent does the current and future public service need given the country's development priorities and global development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals?

(b) Does such talent exist in the environment?

(c) What are the policies and strategies that can be adopted to provide the talent that will be needed by the current and future public service?

(d) Who are the competitors for the same talent?

(e) What strategies should the public service adopt to beat the competition and attract and retain a fair share of the best talent?

(f) Is the public service equipped with competences in strategic human resources management to serve as strategic advisers, internal consultants and champions to the public service on matters of reform, especially as related to human resources?

5. While attracting and retaining the best talent in the public service remains a critical strategic issue, the current situation in many developing countries presents human resources management dilemmas[1] and challenges including:

(a) Global competition for talent which contributes to brain drain;

(b) Human resources management demand-side policies that often go contrary to the real needs, for example:

(i) Blanket hiring freezes at a time when the national, regional and global development objectives would require more human capacity even in terms of numbers;

(ii) Retrenchment programmes that often result in the loss of the most able personnel;

(iii) Wage erosion and compression;

(iv) Reliance on politicization rather than on merit in, inter alia, recruitment and promotions;

(c) Human resources supply-side policies that do not fit the development requirement, for example:

(i) Low priority to and poor and declining funding of higher/tertiary education;

(ii) Gender discriminatory practices restricting women's access to education;

(iii) Inadequate attention paid to, inter alia, other knowledge management institutions;

(d) Donor policies and practices on development and governance which strain national internal human capacities, for example, emphasis on a development-governance improvement agenda that is highly demanding of human resources but is

[1] See Dele Olowu, "African State capacity and public service modernization: resolving human resource management dilemmas" (presentation made during the thirtieth Round-table Conference of the African Association for Public Administration and Management, held in Accra in October 2008).

not supported by systemic human resources improvements that would enable countries' systems to become strong;

(e) Constrained resources for developing the institutional and human capacities in the public sector.

6. To address such dilemmas, there is a need:

(a) To accord strategic importance to human resources management in the public sector;

(b) To find innovative ways of increasing the talent pool;

(c) To beat the competition for talent from, inter alia, the private and civil society sectors, and international organizations;

(d) To block headhunters from taking the best performers from the public service;

(e) To repair the eroded image of the public service so as to make it attractive to the best talent;

(f) To make public service jobs more challenging and satisfying;

(g) To increase the knowledge and skills of current employees in the public service;

(h) To withstand political pressure so as to recruit the best candidate on the basis of merit;

(i) To overcome budget constraints in order to provide attractive remuneration in the public service;

(j) To develop flexible contracting-out and outsourcing practices in those skills demanding areas of the public service where most difficulties are faced. This implies the development of reliable and lasting partnerships between the public bodies and non-Government service providers, including non-profit and commercial entities.

B. Selection and recruitment innovations in the public service

7. As countries grapple with the dilemmas and challenges of availing themselves of the most capable human resources in the public service to improve the management of governance systems and delivery of services, selection and recruitment processes become critical steps for maintaining a high-quality workforce on which all other human resources strategies will depend. Public service institutions in many countries are challenged to examine their selection and recruitment systems and practices to make the necessary innovations that can enable them to attract a fair share of the best talent and become competitive in the labour market. Some of the innovations/changes applied in this respect include:

(a) Readjusting the legal framework governing recruitment to allow flexibility with respect to hiring so as to enable Government agencies to implement recruiting practices more akin to those used in the private sector;

(b) Using competency-based testing and assessment centres;

(c) Offering sign-on recruitment and retention bonuses, especially for highly skilled professional and technical positions for which there are shortages of skilled personnel;

(d) Increasing recruitment speed through decentralized hiring, online continuous application, shorter application periods, using the Internet and other electronic technologies, and communicating directly with organizations that are good sources of potential applicants;

(e) Addressing imbalances in the diversity of the workforce.

8. Problems of selection and recruitment are, however, more acute in developing countries where the talent needed in the public service may not be abundant. While in such countries high unemployment makes applications for unskilled positions abundant, the search for high and middle-level policy, strategic, professional and technical positions on which effective management of the development and service delivery process depends is a daunting one.

9. There are strategic issues, especially in developed countries, which are related to retirements and an ageing workforce. Normally the ageing of the public service raises challenges with regard to knowledge transfer and operational continuity; but it also creates an opportunity to bring in replacements that fit current and future public service requirements. However, for some developed countries, identifying and attracting new employees to counter labour shortages resulting from forecasted demographic shifts represents a new challenge. The public service in such countries will have to deal with issues of ageing workers, increasing retirements, higher demands on services and the changing needs and motivations of older workers. One way will be to remove barriers for those who are willing and able to work beyond the legal retirement age. Either way, there will be great need to make readjustments in the traditional human resources management regimes of the public service to accommodate such measures. A number of Governments in developed countries have already adopted measures in this regard. Even provincial governments, such as the Queensland (Australia) government, Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, have instituted flexible retirement, where employees are allowed and enabled to reduce their work hours and job responsibilities to gradually ease into fuller retirement at a later date. Such measures include part-time arrangements and rehiring retirees as consultants.[2]

10. However, removing restrictive rules and processes will not solve all the problems in the public service recruitment and selection systems. First, the principles that provide crucial protection for employees in the public service from arbitrary and discriminatory treatment, and protection to the public to minimize patronage, promote fairness and create a professional and stable workforce have to be maintained. Secondly, recruitment and selection and all aspects of the human resources management regime in the public service must be tailored to accomplish the mission of the public service. Recruitment and selection should be a flexible and streamlined process that meets current and future needs while at the same time being an open process that promotes fairness to employees and applicants, and is based on merit. The public service will have to reshape recruitment and selection strategies from a

[2] See Queensland government, Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, "Managing an ageing workforce" in *Maturity Matters* at www.opsc.qld.gov.au/library/docs/resources/publications/retention/ageing).

"one size fits all" regimented process to one that is a hybrid of position-specific and career-specific, offering speed and flexibility while maintaining the principle of merit. Holding hiring authorities accountable for the application of good practice rather than control through inflexible rules can best accomplish this goal.

C. Promoting equality and valuing diversity

11. As the human resources management regimes change and innovate to meet the challenges posed by the need to develop, there must be commitment to improve the delivery of public service for all. Policies and practices of the public service must reflect the needs and experiences of all the people it serves. For this, promoting and valuing diversity is central in innovations needed to mould the society of the future with a workforce composed of the brightest, most talented rainbow of all people. Some countries have made strides in this direction. Cases include the civil service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, with its 10-Point Plan launched in 2005 that aims at mainstreaming equality and diversity in all aspects of the work of the civil service.

> "Through understanding the diversity of society, by better reflecting the aspirations, experiences and needs of the people we serve and by respecting and valuing differences, we can provide the policies and services that people want from us. To do this effectively, we need a workforce with the very best possible mix of existing and future talent".[3]

D. Pay reform as capacity-building

12. The ability of the public service to attract, retain, adequately motivate its personnel and build the requisite human resources capabilities is one of the prerequisites to improved service delivery. It is possible to associate the problems linked with poor performance, lack of professionalism and corruption in the public service to low compensation levels and ineffective pay administration. Professor Gelase Mutahaba, referring to the Tanzanian situation, asserts that

> "the consequences of the decline in real pay and weakening of the incentive regime have been disastrous. It has led to depletion of scarce motivational capital in the public service giving rise to: demotivation of civil servants at all levels; reduced work efforts, declining levels in performance; weakening of accountability and control mechanisms; diminished ability to recruit and retain qualified managerial, professional and technical personnel; and reduced commitment to the public service. In addition to the reduced work effort, low and declining pay may reduce goodwill, increase ill will and motivation to engage in counterproductive behaviour not supporting increased production, service delivery, good fiscal management and tolerance for 'deviant behaviour', including time theft and corruption".[4]

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[3] See *Promoting Equality, Valuing Diversity — A Strategy for the Civil Service* at www.civilservice.gov.uk/about/diversity/index.asp.

[4] See Gelase Mutahaba, "Pay reform and corruption in Tanzania's public service" (paper presented during the seminar on potential for public service pay reform to eradicate corruption among civil servants in Tanzania, held in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania on 26 May 2005).

Comprehensive pay reform is a critical element in building the human capacity of the public service. Many developing countries are grappling with balancing the need to reduce the overall public service wage bill with the necessity to improve remuneration so as to attract, motivate and retain skilled staff in the public service.

13. The main objectives of pay reform should include:

(a) Establishing a pay regime that provides for fair and transparent job and pay equity;

(b) Developing a pay structure that can attract and retain individuals with the requisite skills and competences needed in the public service;

(c) Ensuring coherence of compensation management;

(d) Clarifying to all public servants the basis for pay differentials from one institution or service to another;

(e) Strengthening effective pay administration to provide standards, consistency, transparency and accountability throughout the public service.

14. However, pay reform cannot be planned and implemented uniformly in all countries because there are many contextual elements to consider in determining levels and structure of pay. Moreover, pay reform works within two sets of objectives that may be contradictory. For the public service, pay seeks (a) to attract the right employees, motivate them to continue to perform, develop their skills and abilities, and (b) to align satisfactorily Government revenue with productivity and efficiency of the public servants, while reflecting to the employer the importance of the jobs or tasks performed. For the public servant, pay must satisfy basic material needs, provide an incentive to work, develop skills and satisfy basic status needs, and ensure work equity. Pay regimes should be determined at the meeting point between these two sets of expectations. That is why pay systems must take into consideration the historical and economic context in which pay has developed in the particular country, readiness for change and acceptability by key stakeholders.

III. Leadership and human resources capacity development

15. One of the most critical elements of the human capacity in the public service is leadership because it is the engine that inspires and gives direction in the delivery of public services. Public service leaders:

(a) Create an environment for reform and capacity-building, organizational conditions for empowering staff;

(b) Influence service delivery systems;

(c) Identify and grasp opportunities for collaboration in the delivery of services;

(d) Find ways of providing choice and harnessing the energies of all users of their service;

(e) Work to ensure cooperation between leaders across sectors;

(f) Ensure effective, efficient and frugal use and control of human, material and financial resources, including appropriate and well-organized data and information for the delivery of the services;

(g) Establish and operate institutional arrangements to motivate the human resources to adapt and perform in changing external and internal conditions.

16. Leadership permeates the public service from the political level to the smallest supervisory unit and work teams. Leaders with the foregoing qualities should emerge and be developed in the public service, civil society, the private sector and grass-roots community organizations. Leadership is needed to ensure that no segment of the population or area of a country is left behind and the national development objectives and international development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals, are attained in an equitable and inclusive manner. The development of the human resources depends on the inspiration and resolve of leadership to strengthen the public service and on the predisposition of leaders to acknowledge and treat public servants as the most critical resource in the development process. Many countries have embarked on leadership capacity development as a critical component of their public service reform programmes.

17. Developing leadership capacity in the public service should target current and future leaders, including political leadership, such as parliamentarians and ministers, and subnational-level political leaders, such as local government councils, executives and senior public servants. For developing the capacities of future leaders, programmes need to focus on training civil servants at entry and mid-career-levels. They also need to start in universities and other tertiary institutions which are the catchment areas for recruiting public servants. However, in the current era where public administration has moved more towards the wider concept of governance, leaders in all these sectors need to interact with each other to create a common vision for their development and promote a mutual understanding of their respective strengths and weaknesses. Groups such as women and people with disabilities, as well as minority and disadvantaged groups need to be targeted by leadership capacity development programmes to enable them to participate in policymaking, management and leadership so as to address challenges and harness development opportunities. Moreover, leadership capacity-building should not neglect the symbiotic relationships between leadership development and institution-building, where leaders contribute substantially to building institutions and institutions play a role in shaping leadership behaviour.

A. Challenges facing leadership in the public service

18. Developing the capacity of leaders in the public service needs to be undertaken in light of the current and future challenges the leaders have to address. Given the imperatives of achieving national development objectives and the internationally agreed development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals, and alignment of the demands of globalization with local development visions and strategies, some of the challenges that public service leaders have to address include:

(a) Understanding and harnessing the forces of globalization;

(b) Formulating and implementing strategies for poverty eradication;

(c) Designing and implementing conflict prevention and resolution strategies, including building requisite capacities for conflict management, especially in the context of managing diversity in the public service;

(d) Building legitimate and capable State institutions to enhance the legitimacy of the State;

(e) Leading national public services within a world of increasing interdependency;

(f) Conceiving and propelling large-scale socio-economic transformation to cope with the development demands and pace of modern and changing societies;

(g) Developing sustainable leadership capacity, especially through effective and planned succession in the public service;

(h) Managing and mitigating impacts of emergencies, crises and disasters, including climate change, acute food shortages, financial crises and market upheavals, tsunamis and earthquakes.

To summarize the foregoing, modern leadership needs to embrace mastery over change management and the handling of emergencies or crises.

B. Leadership capacity required in the public service

19. Given the foregoing challenges and others, there is a need to clearly identify the leadership capacities that are required to address them in a sustainable manner. This calls for leadership capacity assessment before designing any leadership capacity development programmes and activities. However, it is commonly believed that too few interventions in this domain are formulated based on a thorough and systematic needs assessment. Likewise, not enough is done in terms of systematic monitoring and evaluation of the results achieved with capacity development programmes because they are not preceded by capacity assessment to provide benchmarks against which monitoring and evaluation of impact could be carried out.[5] Each situation gives rise to leadership capacity needs generated by the social, political and economic challenges. However, in a general way and in light of the challenges identified above, the public service needs integrative, entrepreneurial, administrative, adaptive and technical leadership capacities. It also needs to abide by institutional codes and principles to ensure that it is inspired to serve with diligence and dedication now and in the future. Counting on behavioural leadership without supporting institutional provisions in terms of laws, rules, regulations and codes of conduct to govern and regulate the behaviour is risky because leaders can always be tempted to abuse their discretion and power.

20. Integrative ability is required for identifying and ironing out conflicts owing to diverging interests, competition for resources, cultural and religious differences, and diverging values and outlooks as well as concerns of minority groups. In the context of globalization, integrative ability is required to:

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[5] See George Matovu, "From policy to implementation: issues related to developing requisite capacity for effectively implementing decentralization policies in Africa" (presentation made during the Ministerial Conference on Leadership Capacity Development for Decentralized Governance and Poverty Reduction in Africa, held in Yaoundé from 28 to 30 May 2008).

(a) Lead each country to redefine and integrate itself into the global village but without losing its identity;

(b) Tap all abilities from within and outside the public service and inspire every public servant to work towards the agreed development goals;

(c) Seek out and pursue the national interests;

(d) Distribute development activities equally across the country;

(e) Ensure that the development agenda is achieved for the benefit of all citizens;

(f) Ensure that intergenerational equity is guaranteed by paying attention to the way resources are utilized currently so that the generations of tomorrow do not suffer from the consequences of the poor resource planning and utilization of today.

21. Entrepreneurial ability is required for envisioning and strategizing, including analysis of the past, current and future environment and situation, in order to map out paths as well as viable and feasible policy and strategy alternatives for development.

22. Administrative ability is necessary for following and respecting laws, rules, regulations, procedures, due process and prudent utilization of scarce resources to avoid unlimited use of discretion in bureaucracies, chaotic political competition, corruption, lack of accountability and a situation of "survival of the fittest" which leaves many individuals in society vulnerable to all sorts of selfish forces and eventually to violence.

23. Adaptive ability is necessary to ensure effective adaptation to new changes, challenges and demands, especially emanating from the forces of globalization. Technical ability is needed for understanding complex issues and action. Whether it concerns provision of health services, education, water, roads, electricity or agricultural extension services, the public service must avail itself of technically competent leaders to lead the implementation of the development agenda. The meeting point between management and leadership is the action. In every manager there should be sufficient doses of leadership to foresee, create, inspire, adapt to changes and ensure orderly development. Likewise, every leader must have the management capacity to plan, prioritize, steer implementation, monitor and control, evaluate and recast plans.

C. Leadership succession as knowledge management

24. In the literature of leadership capacity development there is much reference to succession planning as a necessary measure for sustainability. However, this is always in reference to personnel. But there is a side of succession planning which concerns organization, conservation and the transmission of knowledge to incoming generations of leaders. Many organizations tend to overlook this critical aspect of knowledge management and let managers depart without leaving behind all the knowledge they accumulated during their years of service. This is a big loss. There are, however, cases where leaders are encouraged to write their memoirs, leaving behind hard copies containing the invaluable knowledge they accumulated. But this occurs in a minority of countries and is in most cases limited to the top political leadership. Yet it is known that leaders at all levels of the public service accumulate

knowledge which should not be allowed to leave or die with them. The question concerns how to utilize modern information and communications technology to tap this knowledge and ensure sustainable knowledge succession.

D. Approaches and methodologies for leadership capacity development

25. Given the diversity of political-administrative cultures and the great variety of societal environments, the leadership of each country has to be open-minded and look at all of the potential solutions to their own problems. The basic guideline for leadership capacity development is that each situation and the needs of the targeted audience should dictate the approaches, techniques, thematic content and training methods to be adopted. In designing, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of leadership development programmes in the immediate, short-, medium- or long-term, organizers should adopt a participatory approach involving the beneficiaries and target groups of such programmes to make them congruent with the needs. Leadership capacity development in the public service can be achieved in many ways depending on the target group, including training, coaching, mentoring, technical advice, study tours, peer-to-peer learning exchanges, high-level consultations, workshops and action-learning.

26. In order for the foregoing approaches and methods to be applied, two capacity development actions need to be taken in the public service. First, human resources managers must be recognized as the most strategic partners in strengthening leadership capacity in the public service because they have the function of identifying the needs and planning the capacity development. In some countries, especially most African countries, in implementing public service reforms, human resources managers and their undeveloped professional status are neglected and relegated to non-core and non-strategic functions when they are supposed to be the top advisers and leaders of public service reform and leadership capacity development programmes. This situation needs to be reversed by repositioning the function of human resources management as a strategic function and by creating competent professional human resources managers in the public service. Secondly, public administration institutes, management development institutes and relevant university faculties must be given equal if not more attention in strengthening public service capacities.

IV. People matter: civic engagement, transparency, accountability and citizen trust in Government

27. There are always two sides in the delivery of public goods and services: the public servants who produce and deliver them and the people who consume them. It is true that public servants need to have adequate capacities and competences to produce and deliver services to the people. However, another enabling factor needed in the process is the trust people have in Government. In this note trust in Government is understood to refer to the faith which a citizen or a development player/actor/stakeholder puts in Government as a whole or in its agents (elected officials, civil servants, including local government officials and public enterprise managers) to act on his or her behalf, make fair decisions and provide services in a predictable and equitable manner. Trust in Government must be regarded as internal

trust among the various institutions and employees of Government and as external trust between the Government and the people it serves. But trust also needs to be perceived in terms of the trust the international community — whether bilateral, multilateral, international or civil society organizations or private sector multinational corporations — has in the Government in question. All these perspectives of trust are critical in the performance and legitimacy of public sector institutions.

28. The role of the human resources is critical in trust. Public servants have a strong influence on the way people trust Government, because they provide services and constantly communicate and are in contact with the citizen/service users. Therefore the human resources in the public service need to act transparently and with accountability to meet the demands of the public. But the other side of the coin is that the people themselves need to be engaged and to participate in the governance and public administration process to complete the cycle of transparency and accountability. Engagement is regarded as an important governance norm that can strengthen and democratize the decision-making process of public servants and produce outcomes that favour the poor and the disadvantaged. The engagement of individuals in the process of governance and public administration therefore increases the opportunity for people to trust Government.

29. What determines trust in Government are the technical and professional capacities, professionalism, ethics, integrity, transparency, accountability, effectiveness and responsiveness of public servants in conducting public affairs, including the delivery of goods and services to the people. Appropriate institutional frameworks have to be in place and effective to constantly shape the behaviour of the public servants and leaders so as to ensure that they behave and act in a way that meets people's expectations. Traditional ones, including public service standing orders, codes of conduct and leadership codes, which are focused more on the behaviour of the public servant especially in terms of respect of rules, procedures, norms, values and etiquette, are used in public service regimes of many countries. But outward-looking ones which focus on satisfaction of the expectations of the people in terms of quality, quantity and promptness of the services delivered have been adopted in countries such as Kenya, the United Kingdom and Australia to enhance trust in Government. These two complement one another to enhance the trust. The institutional measures which target improvement of quality, quantity and promptness of the public goods and services delivered call for putting the engagement of the citizen at the centre of the process and outcome of the delivery of public services and dictate approaches and methods of participatory and engaged governance and public administration. In this way civic engagement in public governance becomes critical in transparency, accountability and effectiveness in the delivery of public services as well as in enhancing trust in Government. When it is stated that people matter in the development of public service capacity, the whole issue is not only about the capacity of public servants but also and probably more so about the people they serve.

A. Civic engagement in public service

30. Civic engagement and participation play important roles in transparency, accountability and strengthening trust in Government. There are emerging practices such as "people budgeting" and "social auditing" with promise for shaping policy.

There are principles and enablers vital to successful operations in civic engagement and capacity-building to this end. But there are also challenges that hobble civic engagement processes which need to be addressed. One of the challenges in mainstreaming engaged and participatory governance in the public service, even in countries where there is already commitment to practice it, is that it contains a triple challenge to capacity-building. First, the public servants, including senior political and technical leaders, must develop the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes to operate within an environment where engagement and participation of the citizens in public service is the norm. Most public servants have been trained to operate bureaucratic hierarchical systems and have got not only to unlearn this but also to learn new ways of engaged and participatory administration. Secondly, the citizens themselves, accustomed to being passive recipients, have got to learn how to engage with public servants to demand transparency, accountability and effectiveness in the delivery of goods and services in the public services. Lastly, institutions, systems, structures, processes and procedures of the public service often are not designed to support engaged and participatory delivery of goods and services. Thus, they have to be reviewed and readjusted to service this purpose. In other words, engaged and participatory governance and public administration calls for an overhaul of the traditional public service both in its structure and human behaviour. Even at constitutional levels where the relationship between the governors and the governed is defined, it is necessary to review how the highest law of a particular country provides or implicitly makes provision for participation and engagement in the delivery of public services.

31. For a start, it is important to look at various cases that highlight key areas to be addressed in mainstreaming civic engagement and participation and to exchange experiences, promote horizontal cooperation and discuss lessons learned among Governments, practitioners, the media, academic institutions, donor agencies and civil society as a whole so as to create basic frameworks for redesigning the public service and its human capacities in order to promote engaged and participatory governance. Follow-up actions can be framed along the lines of identifying key principles behind current successful experiences, developing advocacy initiatives to create commitments to promote civic engagement and identifying suitable tools, methodologies and indicators to monitor and evaluate the processes of civic engagement.

32. The foregoing suggestions can become building blocks for framing an international, regional, national and local architecture for civic engagement through the creation of a pro-engagement and pro-poor leadership forum for exchanging ideas to understand the motivations, approaches and risks faced in civic engagement and to create a pro-engagement leadership and public service model for those who are interested. The countries that have endorsed international conventions and declarations that include commitment to pro-poor development, social justice, gender equity, environmental sustainability, human rights and citizens' rights may now wish to extend these commitments to designing public service structures, systems, procedures, practices and public service regimes as well as leadership and institutional capacities for civic engagement and participation in the delivery of public services. The public service needs to change in terms of the way it engages the people and how it masters information and communications technology to support and facilitate effectiveness, efficiency, transparency, networking, knowledge management and sustainable improvement in the delivery of the public service.

B. Serving in the information age

33. The centrality of data and information to the improvement of public sector performance depends on the speed with which information and services move between two points. Serving in the information age, public service organizations need to develop viable networks of information infrastructure to facilitate effective communication, dissemination and processing of information, an educated and skilled population to effectively create, share and utilize knowledge well and an economic and institutional regime to provide incentives for the efficient use of existing and new knowledge. This shift requires a deep change in bureaucracy, transforming Government into an interconnected, modernized organism that is able to develop with the changing world and changing technologies.

34. Government organizations are inherently knowledge-based organizations where effective utilization of knowledge resources — knowledge management — enables Governments to formulate policies with increased transparency and trust. Better knowledge management practices contribute to effective public services by maximizing productivity in terms of process, time and cost.

35. Public sector organizations are looking to become learning organizations with the objective of exploring how to create a dynamic culture that would be conducive for countries to leapfrog over stages of development and to reap more rapidly the benefits of a nascent information economy. This process of transformation of the public sector is leading to a change in the organization of public administrations which is interoperable, simple, transparent, dynamic, driven by users and equipped for continuous change.

36. Knowledge management is increasingly becoming an integral part of overall e-Government development efforts. The major challenge facing knowledge management implementation in many countries around the world is not a technological one; rather it concerns the requirement for the development of a common culture of modernization of public administration, especially as it relates to human resources capacity-building.

37. There is a vital link between the successful delivery of public services, information and communications technology (ICT) and the management of human resources. While ICT can engender efficient use of resources, improvements in efficiency in the public sector demand shifts and improvements of human competences in the public sector. The integration of ICT for capacity-building in the public sector is crucial to the ability of the public sector to respond to development challenges. The incorporation of ICT into public sector human resources management strategies is seen to improve the managerial, technical and professional skills of public employees. In many cases technology-based services, including distance education, electronic personal identification systems and Internet-based services, may prove to be the only way in which Governments are able to meet their own service delivery targets. It is increasingly being recognized that the partnership between human skills and technology can further the content, extend the reach and increase the effectiveness of public sector programmes.

38. Effective integration of ICT into human resources management encompasses:

(a) Setting up a holistic framework for human resources management which embodies ICT as its central lynchpin;

(b) Re-engineering decision-making processes, the use of technology and the design of tasks and working practices in the Government towards a new partnership between people and technology aimed at efficiency and transparency in the management, operation and monitoring of public sector programmes;

(c) Incorporating ICT in human capacity-building to make people and technology deliver more using the same or fewer resources.

In summary, Governments have a responsibility to fully exploit the potential of ICT in the public sector. While putting in place the enabling environment with the establishment and reform of institutions, regulations and structures, it is important to incorporate the principle of the centrality of ICT into governance strategies, mechanisms and processes. Governments also need to recognize the importance of building human capacities in terms of necessary knowledge and skills to promote innovative and efficient public service delivery. In order to achieve this, it is important to foster an attitude and mindset that is receptive to ICT-based public administration and ICT-based delivery of services.

C. The e-learning platform for human capacity-building

39. The use of ICT and capacity for learning is necessary for a modern workforce in the public sector. Today's public managers need capacity-building in a variety of skills. Governments the world over are recognizing the power of new technologies for imparting such capacity-building and training in the public sector. ICT, including global technological networks such as the Internet, are increasingly being employed to provide access to learning and knowledge infrastructure, thus revolutionizing the traditional learning systems. One conduit for ICT-based human capacity-building in the public sector is e-learning (or online learning), which can be defined as the use of ICT to acquire information, knowledge and skills. For the public sector, e-learning means employing information technology to access, gather, analyse and utilize information and knowledge to improve organizational performance and public service delivery.

40. ICT can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public sector departments and organizations through the strategic application of technologies and ICT-enabled skill development. ICT can deliver skill training and capacity-building programmes specifically targeted to civil servants and decision makers using appropriate technologies. Such e-learning is self-paced — public officials are not bound by the confines of time and place — and can be accessible at their convenience, with training material available online to download for later reading. Because it is self-paced and self-directed, it provides the flexibility to choose content and tools appropriate to differing interests, needs and skill levels. Furthermore, e-learning accommodates multiple learning styles with a variety of delivery methods geared to different learners. The application of ICT in training in the public sector can:

(a) Broaden availability of quality knowledge resources 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for learning and decision-making;

(b) Deliver skill training and capacity-building programmes specifically targeted to civil servants and decision makers, using appropriate technologies;

(c) Increase information, specialist support and remote diagnosis capability for effective project management;

(d) Allow for greater transparency and monitoring of project management decisions;

(e) Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public sector departments and organizations through the strategic application of technologies and ICT-enabled skill development;

(f) Facilitate knowledge, horizontal and vertical exchange and networking among departments;

(g) Enhance the ability of developing countries to participate in and learn from best practices in public administration around the world.

41. Together with the availability of training resources on a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week basis, the use of ICT for human capacity-building can provide specialist support and remote diagnosis capability for effective project management. Online learning can also open up a vista of global and regional development, best practices and a vast multitude of knowledge which resides in the virtual arena. Use of e-learning as a tool for public sector human resources skills development is likely to yield cost savings owing to the elimination of traditional training materials in the long run, provide in-time access to timely information, promote better retention content through personalized learning and lead to faster collaboration among public sector networks. It can also remove barriers to learning and participation in learning, upgrade the skills of the public sector workforce and ensure that every learner realizes his or her full potential. Employing e-learning for human capacity-building can contribute to an improvement in the efficiency of the workforce and better delivery of services. In doing so, public servants can become more creative in developing innovative ways of deploying resources and improving the quality of public service delivery.

42. All of the foregoing benefits of e-learning notwithstanding, there is a strong and urgent need to support the development of enabling ICT infrastructures and networks that are appropriate for each context. It is unfortunate that the poorest countries and areas in the world that most urgently need help in achieving the Millennium Development Goals are disadvantaged by the technological divide and have less opportunity to benefit from e-learning.

V. Conclusion and recommendations

43. It is important to recognize that public service traditions vary around the world, depending upon historical tradition and the system of law that has come to prevail, and upon the levels of literacy and development. Human resources management regimes and the competences in the public service must always be matched with the challenges that are facing or will face the public service. The public service must take the attraction and retention of a fair share of the best talent as strategic for improvements in the delivery of public services. Capacity-building in the public service needs to take into account personnel leadership, institutions, structures, systems, procedures and processes. Capable civil servants cannot produce at their optimum capacity while working within inappropriate institutions, structures and systems. The human factor in capacity-building for development goes beyond public servants to include the capacity of the citizen or consumers of services to participate and engage in the process of governance and public

administration so as to demand better services, transparency and accountability. However, the citizen must also be capable of harnessing some of the tools, such as ICT, used to deliver services.

44. The following recommendations are made to Member States:

(a) **Member States need to strengthen the institutional and human capacities of their public services to enable them to provide more and better services to meet the national development objectives and the internationally agreed development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals;**

(b) **Given that the application of ICT holds potential for increasing and improving the delivery of public services, Member States need to anchor the building of the capacities of their public services on the application of appropriate ICT to improve service delivery and knowledge management;**

(c) **Member States need to strengthen the capacities of management development institutes and universities so that they sustain capacity-building in the public service for the current and future generations;**

(d) **Member States need to pay particular attention to the development of the capacities of human resources managers in the public service to ensure a competent cadre of public servants who can provide professional advice to Government on the direction and capacities of public servants that are needed currently and in the future;**

(e) **Member States need to review their governance and public administration institutional arrangements, structures, systems and practices of the public service, and make them conducive to civic engagement, transparency and accountability as key components of a relationship of trust that is crucial to face the challenges of achieving the Millennium Development Goals.**

45. The following recommendations are made to the Secretariat:

(a) **In its technical cooperation and advisory services, the Secretariat needs to enhance emphasis placed on capacity-building for effective human resources management and development, including the application of ICT in the delivery of services and knowledge management;**

(b) **The Secretariat should increase the provision of online training using the United Nations Public Administration Network, which is a cheaper and more effective way of contributing to the enhancement of human resources capacities in various fields;**

(c) **The United Nations should recognize and promote some regional centres of excellence that can offer medium to long-term training and promote cooperation among Governments of the region. Such activities can help not only to build hard technical skills and human capacities, but also to promote friendship across the public services;**

(d) **Through research, analysis and advisory services, the Secretariat should support deepening of understanding, transfer of knowledge and building of capacities for enhanced civic engagement.**

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Review of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance

Review of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

The present note highlights the major activities undertaken by the Secretariat in 2008 under the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance for review by the Committee of Experts on Public Administration and also considers the current process of organizational changes that have been undertaken by the Secretariat with a view to streamlining the operations of the Programme and strengthening its capacities to address the needs of Member States.

This note also presents, for review and approval by the Committee, the main activities proposed for implementation during the period 2010-2011. The Committee is requested to provide feedback to the Secretariat on both the scope and direction of the reorganization mentioned above and the proposed activities.

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I. Introduction

1. The present note highlights the major activities undertaken by the Secretariat in 2008 under the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance for review by the Committee of Experts on Public Administration. It also considers the ongoing process of organizational changes that have been undertaken by the Secretariat with a view to streamlining the operations of the Programme and strengthening its capacities in addressing the needs of Member States in their pursuit of efficient and effective public administration systems which are able to achieve national development objectives.

2. This note also presents, for review and approval by the Committee, the main activities proposed for implementation during the period 2010-2011. The Committee is requested to provide feedback to the Secretariat on both the scope and direction of the reorganization mentioned above and the proposed activities, which are intended to assist Member States in meeting their current governance and public administration challenges in a globalized world. In the preparation of this note, the Secretariat took into consideration the Programme's strengths and accomplishments along with recommendations contained in recent evaluation reports of the Programme in particular and requirements for the strengthening of the development Pillar of the Secretariat in general.

3. The Division for Public Administration and Development Management of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs is the administrative unit within the Secretariat mandated to implement the aforementioned Programme in Public Administration and Finance. The Division's mission is to assist Member States in strengthening their governance and public administration capacities and technology systems so as to achieve the national development objectives in the context of the internationally agreed development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals.

II. Update on major activities

4. The activities of the United Nations Secretariat in the area of public administration and finance are implemented under subprogramme 8, Public administration and finance, of section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the programme budget, by the Division for Public Administration and Development Management of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat. The following is a summary of the major activities implemented in 2008.

A. Normative work

5. The seventh session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration was held in New York from 14 to 18 April 2008. At the seventh session, the Committee dealt with the following substantive items: (a) participatory governance and citizens' engagement in policy development, service delivery and budgeting; (b) compendium of basic United Nations terminology in governance and public administration; (c) review of the activities of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance; and (d) the public administration perspective on the theme of the

annual ministerial review held during the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2007 of the Economic and Social Council: Strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through the global partnership for development. Upon the recommendation of the Committee, the Council adopted resolution 2008/32 of 25 July 2008, entitled "Report of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration on its seventh session".

6. In that resolution, the Economic and Social Council, pursuant to stressing the importance of capacity-building for public administration in respect of the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, requested the Secretariat to enhance its support for capacity-building, including in the public sector, ensuring that available resources were adequate and existing resource levels were maintained.

7. On 14 July 2008, at United Nations Headquarters in New York, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, through the Division for Public Administration and Development Management, organized a panel on public accountability entitled "The role of public accountability in good governance" for States members of the Economic and Social Council. It was organized to support the conclusions of the 2008 annual ministerial review held by the Council on "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development". The panel also celebrated the sixtieth Anniversary of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance and highlighted its contributions to the strengthening of accountability and transparency in governance.

8. The panel outlined the following conditions and variables likely to be conducive to public accountability: (a) education in leadership, (b) partnering with the private sector, (c) meaningful engagement and involvement of civil society in audit and governance, (d) effective and independent audit institutions as watchdogs of public finances, (e) political will and (f) financing for development.

9. The panel placed particular emphasis on the fight against corruption and the increased involvement of civil society in governance as two crucial mechanisms for strengthening public accountability. It clarified the links between public accountability and effective public administration. The panel highlighted the role of South-South cooperation in advocating for public accountability, while stressing the importance of the independence of audit institutions and their cooperation with civil society towards the effective achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

10. On 13 November 2008, the Second Committee of the General Assembly held a discussion panel organized by the Division for Public Administration and Development Management on "Post-conflict State capacity: reconstructing public administration for conflict prevention, recovery, and development". It focused on three essential aspects of post-conflict reconstruction of governance and public administration: (a) the challenges of reconstructing the public service after conflict and the role of the public service in building social cohesion through the effective delivery of services, (b) the prospects for reconstructing government after conflict, with emphasis on decentralization for peacebuilding, and (c) how to transform the mindset of government and civil society leaders in divided societies to enable them to work effectively together to achieve development.

11. The panel reached the consensus that the approaches used in conflict situations often did not work and that the decision to call political enemies to the negotiation

table immediately to sign agreements often resulted in failure. The Second Committee was advised that diplomats and other peacemakers needed to first address the process and attitudinal dimensions of peacemaking.

B. Analytical research

12. The *World Public Sector Report* is produced biennially as a research and analytical tool to provide policymakers and civil society with relevant research findings and information on issues related to the public sector. In its resolution 59/55 of 2 December 2004, the General Assembly recognized the significant analytical and operational contributions of the *Report* to public administration. Past editions include *World Public Sector Report 2001: Globalization and the State*;[1] *World Public Sector Report 2003: E-Government at the Crossroads*;[2] *World Public Sector Report 2005: Unlocking the Human Potential for Public Sector Performance*;[3] and *World Public Sector Report 2008*, entitled *People Matter: Civic Engagement in Public Governance*.[4]

13. The *World Public Sector Report* for 2009 will be devoted to "Reconstructing governance and public administration after conflict: challenges, practices and lessons learned" and will contribute to the search for how best to reconstruct governance and public administration after violent conflict, with a view to ensuring security, long-lasting peace, and respect for human rights and development. The *Report* will be based on both a literature review of the main theories and issues and an analysis of relevant case studies and good practices from all five world regions covering the period from the end of the Second World War to the present day, thus consolidating the existing knowledge within the United Nations system for the benefit of all countries seeking to reconstruct their governance systems and public administration. It will also offer the opportunity to clearly position the work of the Division at the centre of the United Nations development agenda.

14. The *United Nations e-Government Survey*, which, like the *World Public Sector Report*, is produced biannually, has, since 2002, provided Member States with a global view and assessment of the online public services delivered by the Governments of 192 countries. The *United Nations e-Government Survey 2008: From e-Government to Connected Governance*[5] was extremely well received by Member States, a number of which praised the results of the survey and promoted their rankings in their local newspapers. The following countries requested and funded advisory service missions to strengthen their respective e-government capacity: Bahrain, Colombia, Lesotho, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Tunisia and Uzbekistan. A number of these countries have already implemented recommendations of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on e-government. In addition, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Intelligence Economist Unit have requested permission to use the web measure and e-participation indices of the *Survey* to augment their own analyses.

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[1] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.01.II.H.2.
[2] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.H.3.
[3] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.H.5.
[4] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.07.II.H.11.
[5] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.II.H.2.

15. In celebration of its sixtieth anniversary in 2008, the Programme published a booklet entitled *The United Nations Contribution to the Improvement of Public Administration: A 60-Year History*.[6] The report broadly reviews the global trends in public administration, briefly discusses the establishment of the Programme and the system of general direction and supervision of the Programme provided by the United Nations legislative bodies, summarizes the diverse activities carried out under the Programme during the last 60 years, and details the present position of the Programme and its future perspective.

16. Three ad hoc expert group meetings were held in 2008 on new developments or emerging trends in governance and public administration that are of interest to Member States, providing forums where expert knowledge and experience could be mobilized so as to identify critical issues and begin forging consensus on policy options:

(a) Expert Group Meeting on "Lessons Learned in Post-Conflict State Capacity: Reconstructing Governance and Public Administration Capacities in Post-Conflict Societies", held in Accra from 2 to 4 October 2008. Experts discussed key lessons learned which they would include in preparing the *World Public Sector Report: Reconstructing Governance and Public Administration after Conflict*. The following topics were proposed by the participants: the heterogeneity of post-conflict situations and the need for further research to be conducted on how Governments break down and are reformed and how conflict ends; rebuilding trust in government after conflict; effective leadership; human resource capacity development in post-conflict situations; the need for development partners to engage the population in rebuilding its government so as to create real ownership; service delivery: the visible sign of recovery; and information and communications technology (ICT) and traditional problem-solving mechanisms in post-conflict situations;

(b) Expert Group Meeting on Economic and Social Councils, held at the United Nations Office at Vienna on 24 and 25 July 2008. The Meeting aimed to strengthen the promotion of dialogue and exchange of knowledge and innovations relating to civic engagement in national socio-economic policymaking. It provided a platform to enable more than 20 presidents and senior officials from economic and social councils worldwide and international organizations to discuss key concepts and issues related to civic participation and the role of economic and social councils as tools for promoting civil society engagement in governmental policymaking, in pursuit of the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and fulfilment of the national economic and social agenda;

(c) Expert Group Meeting on the *e-Government Survey*: Getting to the Next Level, held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 11 and 12 December 2008, with the participation of experts in the field of e-government indicators, to review and validate the *Survey* questions. The 2010 issue of the *Survey* will be prepared on the basis of the outcome of the Meeting.

17. In addition to the Expert Group Meetings, the following major meetings were organized by the Programme in 2008:

[6] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.II.H.8.

(a) Forum on Sustainable Urbanization in the Information Age, jointly organized by the Global Alliance for ICT and Development, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the American Institute of Architects New York Chapter, and the Regional Plan Association, with the support of the City of New York, and held on 23 and 24 April 2008 at United Nations Headquarters. The event addressed the global challenges posed by rapid urbanization and its impact on global warming and the natural environment — ranging from poverty and inequality to natural and man-made disasters — and called, in this regard, for better sustainable planning for urban growth;

(b) Pan African Conference of Ministers of Local Government on Leadership Capacity-Building for Decentralized Governance and Poverty Reduction in Africa, with the theme "From Policy to Implementation: Challenges and Strategies for Effective Implementation of Decentralized Governance in Africa", held in Yaoundé from 28 to 30 May 2008. It was attended by ministers and heads of delegations in charge of decentralization and local government, accompanied by senior civil servants, chairpersons of associations of local governments, and mayors representing different countries of Africa. The declaration of the Conference called upon the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat to work with ministries in charge of local governments as well as local governments in Africa to strengthen their capacities to implement effective decentralization processes, with a view to meeting the requirements for achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

(c) Seminar for Directors of Schools and Institutes of Public Administration and Management Development in Africa, convened to discuss standards of excellence in public administration education and training, organized by the Programme, in cooperation with the International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (IASIA), the Centre africain de formation et de recherche administratives pour le développement (CAFRAD) and the Africa Management Development Institutes Network (AMDIN), designed by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs/IASIA International Taskforce on Standards of Excellence in Public Administration Education and Training, and held in Kampala from 14 to 18 July 2008. The Seminar called upon the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and other international development partners to provide support to the application of those standards in building the capacities of institutes of public administration and management development institutes in Africa;

(d) Joint Department of Economic and Social Affairs-IASIA-Scuola Superiore della Pubblica Amministrazione (SSPA) Euro-Mediterranean Conference on "Redesigning Public Administration Training to Deal with the Global Development Agenda", held in Rome on 13 and 14 October 2008. This was another regional event that aimed at initiating capacity-building of institutes of public administration and management development institutes using standards of excellence in public administration education and training. The main objective of the Conference was to support capacity-building in public administration education and training and to bring together representatives from schools and institutes of public administration in the European Union (EU), the Mediterranean and the Middle East, with a view to raising awareness of the importance of providing quality training to senior civil servants in order to improve public sector performance in delivery in respect of the internationally agreed agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals.

C. Exchange of best practices

18. The United Nations Public Service Awards programme was established by the Economic and Social Council in 2000 to promote better delivery of services by Governments. This Award confers the most prestigious international recognition of excellence in public service. It rewards the creative achievements and contributions of public service institutions with respect to promoting a more effective and responsive public administration (further information is available from http://www.unpan.org/dpepa_psaward.asp).

19. The selection process for the 2008 United Nations Public Service Awards brought forth 183 nominations from 39 countries. A total of 12 pioneering projects from the developing and developed world were honoured with the most prestigious international recognition of excellence in public service, focusing on innovative projects that had prioritized accountability and transparency, service delivery and innovative mechanisms of participation in public administration.

20. In an effort to make the path to e-government clearer and more easily accessible, given the complexity of e-government operations, the Programme is involved in an ongoing process of compiling cases of innovative e-government applications from all geographical regions of the world. This has resulted in the publication of the *Compendium of Innovative E-government Practices*, vol. III, which aims to promote knowledge-sharing and exchange of proved e-government applications among various countries, thereby reducing the costs involved in setting up completely new systems. The *Compendium* is slated for release in January or February 2009.

21. The United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN) (www.unpan.org) is an online network of more than 35 relevant international and regional institutions and more than 10 United Nations-related institutions. Set up in 2000, UNPAN serves as a global network and portal for public administration. Its main objective is to build capacity; bridge the digital divide; promote South-South cooperation; and access, process and disseminate relevant information through the utilization of up-to-date information and communications technology for the promotion of better public administration. The portal has registered one of the highest numbers of visitors among the Department of Economic and Social Affairs websites; however, it needs to be promoted consistently in order to reach a greater critical mass of public sector institutions around the world.

22. The new initiative of the Division, the United Nations Global Knowledge Repository for Electronic/Mobile Government (EMGKR), is a global online facility for knowledge transfer, information dissemination, partnership and state-of-the-art research on electronic/mobile government development in Member States. The purpose of the Repository is to promote worldwide knowledge-sharing and collaboration on electronic/mobile government among development stakeholders aimed towards achieving national e-solutions. The value of the Repository lies in its provision of "free" and unimpeded access to knowledge resources on e-government to national policymakers, the private sector and civil society. The Repository responds to the needs of developing countries in respect of building national capacities in electronic and mobile government by providing information and tools for the development of comprehensive electronic/mobile government policies and programmes in support of public sector development.

23. The national economic and social councils represent an emerging framework for multi-stakeholder decision-making at the national level and contribute to policymaking in an informed and participatory manner. In many developing countries, however, particularly in Africa, these Councils, owing to a lack of credibility or lack of the financial resources needed to operate properly, have no significant role in influencing policymaking processes. In this regard, in 2008 the Programme developed a project to support the Councils in Africa, both in francophone Africa where most of them are located and in anglophone Africa, in three main areas of activity: (a) Support for the Councils in improving their institutional framework by improving the laws and regulations that govern them and empower them; (b) enhancement of the capacity of Council members to evaluate public policies and apply participatory governance principles; and (c) building partnerships between the Councils. This should improve service delivery and accountability in public programmes, including enhancing capacities for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The project has received preliminary approval and should be fully operational in 2009.

D. Capacity-building services

24. The Division carries out, through its three substantive branches, capacity-development services in the form of advisory services and training activities on subjects falling within the mandate of the Division. The overall thrust of the programme is to assist, at the request of Member States, in the capacity-building of Government officials and institutions and, increasingly, of civil society organizations for the purpose of reforming and modernizing public administration. It should be noted that the findings and recommendations of advisory missions and the outcomes of training activities, including their publications, feed into the normative and advocacy work of the Division and provide support to the intergovernmental dialogue of the Economic and Social Council and the Committee.

25. Though demand-driven, the Division's capacity-development services conform to the priority themes decided by the Economic and Social Council and by the Committee. In this regard, for 2008, over 50 projects were implemented in the following areas: (a) improvement of transparency and accountability, (b) decentralized governance, (c) participatory and equitable governance, (d) post-conflict governance, (e) ICT application to governance (e-governance) and (f) governance for poverty alleviation (pro-poor governance).

26. A number of training workshops and online training courses for participants from developing countries were organized in 2008. In this regard:

(a) The UNPAN Online Training Centre (UNPAN OTC), developed in October 2005, gained traction in year 2008. With the key objective of providing free online training courses to anyone interested in gaining knowledge or upgrading their skills in public administration, 11 new courses were developed and made available in the year 2008 and 3 courses were translated to other languages, contributing to a total of 14 courses in English, 4 in Russian, 3 in Ukrainian and 1 in French. The courses are prepared by the Division with substantive contributions from various partners including United Nations bodies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations University International Institute for Software Technology (UNU-IIST), and external partners such as the American

Society for Public Administration (ASPA), the African Training and Research Centre in Administration for Development (Centre africain de formation et de recherche administratives pour le développement (CAFRAD)), the Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration (Asia and the Pacific) (EROPA), the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP), the Regional Cooperation Office for City Information (Asia and the Pacific) (RCOCI) and the Supreme School of Privatization and Entrepreneurship (Europe) (SSPE). The courses that have been particularly well received include those on "Building a community of practice for electronic governance", "Decentralized governance", "Knowledge management in government organization" and "Results-based monitoring and evaluation for Millennium Development Goals implementation". The UNPAN Online Training Centre utilizes two types of customized software: (i) a learning management system to facilitate management of learning content and monitoring of learners in respect of tracking progress, including the awarding of certification upon course completion; (ii) a course authoring tool to help staff members and partners create online courses quickly and easily with reference to substantive training content. With the increased number of course offerings, the number of online enrolments reached close to 2,000 in year 2008, exceeding the total for the period 2006-2007. Over 400 learners received course certificates following successful completion of the course, two thirds of whom were from developing countries;

(b) A seminar for elected women local government leaders on the theme "Strengthening women's leadership in local government for effective decentralized governance and poverty reduction in Africa: roles, challenges and strategies" was held. The Seminar facilitated exchange of experiences on challenges faced by elected women local government leaders and strategies for strengthening their role and leadership capacities in respect of effectively implementing decentralized governance programmes for poverty eradication in Africa;

(c) By organizing training sessions, the Division supported human development, pro-poor concepts and national development strategies. Support was provided in the preparation of national human development reports in many countries (including Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Gabon, Mali and Mauritania); and for training sessions organized on human development and/or pro-poor policies in countries such as Cameroon, Chad, the Comoros, Guinea, Mali and Mauritania;

(d) The Department of Economic and Social Affairs has been collaborating with the International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (IASIA) and institutes responsible for public administration education and training in designing standards of excellence in public administration education and training. The standards were adopted by representatives of institutes who gathered in Kampala (July 2008) during the IASIA Annual Conference. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs has embarked on an undertaking to popularize the standards and has been working with institutes in applying those standards in capacity-building. Two regional workshops have been conducted in this regard: one for Africa and another for the Mediterranean region. Workshops are planned in Asia and Latin America;

(e) The Division prepared a two-day workshop to upgrade the policymaking capacities and technical skills of Government officials and practitioners from developing countries in back-office management for electronic and mobile government in Asia and the Pacific. The members of the Asia and Pacific group

agreed on the establishment of an open virtual community website to facilitate further discussion on the development of the electronic/mobile government repository in the region. Preparation is under way of a proposal on the composition and functioning of the executive committee for the project and the proposal is to be submitted to the Secretariat for review and approval. An executive committee meeting to discuss concrete ways to advance the implementation of the project is being organized;

(f) The Global Alliance for ICT and Development, along with the United Nations Global Compact Office and other United Nations organizations, co-organized the first-ever United Nations Private Sector Forum on 24 September 2008 in New York, gathering together over 85 business, civic and government leaders to work with the United Nations on a long-term response to the global food crisis and endemic poverty, and to connect and share ideas and experiences. At the Forum, technology was clearly recognized as a key instrument for bridging the gaps in poverty reduction and for improving health and education, particularly in countries in Africa and in low-income countries in other regions. ICT was also seen as a transforming factor in the efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The outcome of the Forum was reported at the high-level event on the Millennium Development Goals convened by the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly on 25 September 2008;

(g) In support of the International Conference on Financing for Development, and the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, held in Doha in November/December 2008, the Global Alliance for ICT and Development, in cooperation with the International Chamber of Commerce, organized a high-level working session on innovative financing for digital development. The event brought together high-level participants, including development, finance and technology ministers, industry leaders, and representatives from the private sector, non-governmental organizations and United Nations organizations, to brainstorm on new ways to mobilize resources for realizing the ICT-for-development agenda including through leveraging virtual mechanisms such as social networking;

(h) The Global Alliance organized a Global Forum on Access and Connectivity: Innovative Funding for ICT for Development in Kuala Lumpur on 19 and 20 May 2008 in conjunction with the World Congress on Information Technology. The event brought together about 400 participants who engaged in debates on how to promote affordable connectivity, ICT applications and services for development and how to create the appropriate policy and regulatory environment in small island, developing and least developed countries for accommodating much-needed ICT investments and promoting innovative financing for ICT for development;

(i) The International Conference for Africa Parliamentary Knowledge Network Building, held in Cairo on 4 and 5 June 2008, aimed to provide a political and technical platform for parliaments from Africa to enable them to agree on the charter for, and a plan of action outlining the work modalities of, the Africa Parliamentary Knowledge Network, established with the support of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to promote and enhance the collaborative creation and sharing of knowledge, ideas, experiences and good practices among

parliamentary administrations in Africa in the areas of legislation, information, research and documentation, and ICT;

(j) The Meeting on "Innovations in Governance in the Mediterranean Region with a Special Focus on Methodologies for the Transfer of Innovations", was held in Dubrovnik, Croatia from 23 to 25 April 2008, having been organized by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in collaboration with the Central State Office for Administration of the Government of Croatia. The Meeting constituted one of the activities of the Programme for Innovation in Public Administration in the Euro-Mediterranean Region. The Meeting culminated in the adoption of the Dubrovnik Declaration on Promoting a Culture of Innovation in Governance in the Mediterranean Region.

27. Other major ongoing capacity-development services are described below:

(a) Strengthening Parliaments' Information Systems in Africa's regional capacity-building initiative aimed at leveraging information and communications technology (ICT) to support regional efforts to strengthen democracy and good governance in eight pilot parliaments in Africa, namely, those of Angola, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, and the Pan African Parliament. The opportunity to view the problems of parliaments in a broader regional context made apparent the fact that, despite the differences in parliamentary traditions and languages, many requirements that would otherwise have appeared to be unique were actually common to most or all parliaments. The regional perspective has managed to highlight issues that can be better — and most effectively — dealt with at a regional/continental level in order to provide high-quality and sustainable solutions for African parliaments;

(b) Given the success of the above pilot project and the need that it generated for strengthening African parliaments using ICT, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Pan African Parliament and the Africa Parliamentary Knowledge Network are now implementing, with financial support from the Government of Italy, the successor project covering all parliaments in Africa, the "Africa i-Parliaments Action Plan: Strengthening the Role of African Parliaments in Fostering Democracy and Good Governance through Knowledge and Information Management". The programme is expected to promote a new political culture that embraces free and open access to public information, thus creating a favourable environment for the development of the information society. Accessibility to parliamentary information and the exchange of information among parliaments will be greatly facilitated by the adoption of common standards and by the introduction of parliamentary information systems. The wider accessibility of parliamentary activities, together with the enhanced capacity of parliamentary staff and enhanced quality of parliamentary information services, will strengthen the pivotal role of African parliaments as institutions that enforce good governance, promote democratic accountability, and create political legitimacy through the active and informed participation of civil society organizations and citizens;

(c) The Measurement and Evaluation Tool for e-Government Readiness (METER) is an online interactive tool designed to assist Governments and decision makers at every level throughout the world in developing, monitoring, refining and improving the context within which information and communications technology is used to transform government. Having been conceived to serve as an advisory tool, METER has been designed to assist Governments in identifying the issues affecting

e-government development that need to be addressed. Thus, METER helps to determine and monitor the current state of affairs within a country with regard to the establishment of an environment enabling e-government development. In this way, it guides policymakers and government officials in their e-Government development initiatives by raising their awareness and drawing their attention to key issues that need to be properly addressed. In partnership with the Center for Technology in Government, State University of New York at Albany, and drawing upon advice from Microsoft Corporation, METER is in the process of being finalized as a web-enabled tool;

(d) The major activities implemented by the Programme in support of poverty eradication include poverty surveys aimed at establishing profiles and mapping for a successful poverty reduction strategy. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs supported and supervised poverty surveys in countries such as Chad, Mali and Mauritania. In close cooperation with AFRISTAT (l'observatoire économique et statistique d'Afrique subsaharienne), the Division produced a common methodological framework for poverty monitoring and evaluation. This framework is currently being disseminated in African countries. The Division continues to support the implementation of the poverty reduction strategy by using tools such as the public expenditure review; the medium-term expenditure framework; and results-based programming and budgeting;

(e) The International Training Programme on Peacebuilding and Good Governance for African Civilian Personnel (ITPPGG), established in 2002 through collaboration between the Legon Centre for International Affairs, University of Ghana, and the International Training Programme for Conflict Management (ITPCM) of the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna, Pisa, Italy, represents a response to the dearth of trained African civilian personnel for peace support operations. The core objective of the project is to provide a ready pool of trained and skilled African personnel to fill the civilian component of field peace support operations and to complement the work of the military and police personnel. In 2008, the project trained 58 African civilian personnel for peace support missions; and 20 African trainers and 16 persons from 9 African countries for election observation. A curriculum with detailed learning objectives, methodologies and reference material, which trained 23 persons from 16 African countries as human rights field officers, was developed, as well as an active learning package in electronic format for both the foundation and the specialization courses, designed to facilitate a continuing and interactive learning process for the participants on issues relating to peacebuilding and good governance;

(f) The Africa Governance Inventory (AGI) Portal is a flexible management tool for assisting Governments in improving management, coordination, programming and monitoring of resources allocated to governance. Since 2003, the Portal has been available on the Internet to support ongoing governance efforts in Africa. The AGI country databases of Benin, Burundi and Tunisia were updated in 2008. The AGI-Benin database in particular contains detailed information on 206 governance initiatives implemented in the country since 1990, mainly in the areas of public administration and socio-economic management. The AGI-Burundi database contains information on 48 governance initiatives implemented since 1998, mostly in the area of peace and security. In addition, the AGI-Burundi home page lists major post-conflict reconstruction efforts and describes the current status of governance in the country. The AGI-Tunisia database contains information on 27 governance initiatives

implemented since 1997, primarily in the areas of public administration and socio-economic management. Data collection was carried out as part of the collaboration between the Africa Governance Inventory and the Programme for Innovation in Public Administration in the Euro-Mediterranean Region;

(g) To tackle challenges associated with inadequate capacity for managing human resources in the public sector of African countries, there is a need to adopt a model of the human resources management function that will best enable Governments to manage their staff so as to achieve their key objectives. The Division has been working with the group of public sector managers of human resources in Africa to establish the Africa Public Sector Human Resource Managers Network (APS-HRMnet), through which professional capacity-building in human resource management in the public sector in Africa can be enhanced. The objectives of the Managers Network are to: promote excellence, integrity and professional standards in the practice of human resources management in the public sector in Africa and to support continental and regional efforts to implement harmonized public service commitments such as those set out in the Charter for Public Service in Africa;

(h) The Department of Economic and Social Affairs has been working with countries in Latin America to train public servants on the implementation of the Charter for Public Service. A number of workshops have been conducted in this regard and it is expected that the training will improve professionalism, transparency and ethics in respect of public service in the region;

(i) The Secretariat is organizing, in partnership with Kyung Hee University, the World Civic Forum to be held in Seoul, from 12 to 15 May 2009. The Forum will assist in the development of standards and processes in democratic governance to help create participatory architectures in which citizens can play a more active role by promoting new leadership values and by exchanging successful experiences in public administration. Specifically, the Forum will organize a series of workshops to address global challenges, including climate change, and the promotion of knowledge-sharing to engage civil society in addressing global development goals and partnership-building among civil society, institutions of higher learning and government actors.

E. Coordination

28. The Division also undertakes important coordinating activities in the area of governance and public administration within and outside of the United Nations system. They encompass:

(a) The Governance and Institution-building Cluster of the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs;

(b) The system-wide implementation of World Summit on the Information Society action lines C1, C7eGov and C11, with the participation of the multi-stakeholders;

(c) The widest network of organizations in the area of governance and public administration, namely, the United Nations Public Administration Network, which is utilized to implement the exchange of knowledge, documentation dissemination and training;

(d) The Global Alliance for ICT for Development which continued to serve the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in its multi-stakeholder advisory capacity;

(e) The Internet Governance Forum of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which facilitates the discussions on the main public policy issues related to Internet governance.

29. In order to engender cooperation and promote common approaches among United Nations entities, some of the planned outputs, such as the UNPAN Portal, the United Nations Global Knowledge Repository for Electronic/Mobile Government and training courses, have been developed in cooperation with the members of the Governance and Institution-building Cluster of the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs. As the focal point for the cluster within the Executive Committee, the Division contacted the Cluster partners on 30 October 2008, with a view to holding an exchange on the narratives for activities planned under the programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011. In addition, the Division enumerated nine areas where collaboration with the Cluster partners has already been further strengthened and new joint initiatives have been agreed upon. A review of the work programmes circulated by Cluster members identified no overlap, duplication or inconsistencies within the programme. Institutional and regional differences require, and justify, the existing degree of flexibility in the formulation of objectives, accomplishments and indicators.

30. In the context of the Executive Committee exercise, the Division received positive responses from a number of partners in respect of collaboration on the following projects:

(a) Contribution to UNPAN with respect to building knowledge in the area of governance and public administration issues at the regional level;

(b) Building further the knowledge base for electronic and mobile government: collaboration with the Bureau for Development Policy of UNDP;

(c) An ad hoc expert group meeting on public sector leadership capacity-building: collaboration with the Bureau for Development Policy of UNDP and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA);

(d) An ad hoc expert group meeting on public sector human resources development: collaboration with the Bureau for Development Policy of UNDP and ESCWA;

(e) A capacity-building workshop on reforming institutions of the public sector for development: collaboration with the Bureau for Development Policy of UNDP, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and ESCWA.

(f) A capacity-building workshop on developing human resources management capacities in the public sector: collaboration with the Bureau for Development Policy of UNDP and ESCWA.

31. As part of World Information Society Week in May 2008, the Division for Public Administration and Development Management of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs organized the subsequent facilitation meeting on the progress made during 2008 by all stakeholders in relation to the implementation of World

Summit on the Information Society action lines C1, C7eGov and C11, with a focus on the role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of international cooperation on ICT for development and e-government. The meeting provided the participants with a platform for exchanging information and experience, identifying the proprietary areas for implementation within the action lines; and creating synergies among different stakeholders for more effective knowledge-sharing and collaboration in order to ensure the implementation of the Summit action lines at the international, regional and national levels. The participants at the meeting recognized the importance of using the means of communications and exchange created by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in previous years to facilitate cooperation among stakeholders via the dedicated online platform established within the UNPAN Portal, at http://www.unpan.org/post-WSIS-C1-C7home.asp.

32. The Division has been developing continuously the United Nations Public Administration Network and its portal to fulfil the requests of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly (see Assembly resolutions 59/55 and 60/34 and Council resolutions 2005/55 and 2006/47) and UNPAN clients, in particular those from developing countries. The portal was relaunched after a complete facelift in early 2008. The new Web 2.0 site strategically refocuses on the needs of external users, including Member States, while making itself more useful to UNPAN partners through richer content and self-service options. The website of the Global Alliance for ICT and Development was integrated into the same infrastructure in 2008. Both websites now offer its clients rich collaboration tools such as blogs, search engines, discussion boards, etc.

33. In 2008, the Global Alliance for ICT and Development continued to support and promote, within the information and communication technologies for development (ICTD) community, its flagship partnership initiatives. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the Global Initiative for Inclusive Information and Communication Technologies (G3ict) and the Global Alliance organized a Global Forum in Geneva on 21 April 2008 to explore the impact of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities[7] on the evolution of ICT standards, with the active participation of industry, standards development organizations, non-governmental organizations, and other major parties. A Joint United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)/Global Initiative for Inclusive Information and Communication Technologies/Global Alliance for ICT and Development Seminar on Implementing the Digital Accessibility Agenda of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Challenges and Opportunities for Signatory States was held on 3 December 2008 at United Nations Headquarters in New York to contribute to the rapid and effective implementation of the Convention in general and its digital accessibility agenda in particular.

34. The Global Alliance for ICT and Development enhanced its global outreach by launching a Global Alliance for ICT and Development Regional Network for Latin America and the Caribbean on 4 and 5 February 2008 in San Salvador. The launching of the Network, which coincided with the Second Ministerial Conference on the Information Society, eLAC2007, gathered together ICT-for-development policymakers and experts and representatives from Governments, the private sector, academia and civil society from the region who made specific recommendations and

[7] General Assembly resolution 61/106, annex I.

proposals to the Ministerial Conference on the role of information and communication technologies in poverty eradication, health, education, youth employment and e-government, in preparation for the discussion on the Regional Plan of Action on the Information Society for Latin America and the Caribbean for the period 2008-2010.

35. The Global Alliance for ICT and Development also strengthened its stakeholder network, in particular by reaching out to youth communities and engaging them in developing a youth-based ICT-for-development agenda. It co-organized, together with the Global Alliance for ICT and Development Committee of e-Leaders of Tomorrow for ICT and Youth and AtHGO International, the Global Innovation Forum for Education and Development, held in Yerevan from 21 to 24 October 2008. The Forum gathered together over 300 young people who designed cutting-edge ICT-based solutions to development challenges in the areas of education, climate change and health.

36. The Internet Governance Forum Secretariat is based in the United Nations Office at Geneva and is mandated to facilitate international deliberations on public policy issues related to Internet governance. It operates under the umbrella of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management which also provides it with administrative support. The Internet Governance Forum Secretariat is funded through extrabudgetary contributions. The Secretary-General established a Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group to assist him in convening the Forum. The Advisory Group members include representatives of Governments, the private sector and civil society, including the academic and technical communities, in all regions. A description of the activities of the Internet Governance Forum is included in the annual report of the Secretary-General on the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcome of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels, which is submitted to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development at the request of the Economic and Social Council. The first two Forum meetings were held in Athens in 2006 and Rio de Janeiro in 2007. The third meeting, which was held in Hyderabad, India, from 3 to 6 December 2008, focused on the overall theme of "Internet for all".

III. Planned activities for the period 2010-2011

37. The programme implementation strategy of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management will be based on an integrated approach comprising advocacy, provision of substantive support to relevant intergovernmental bodies, analytical work, advisory services, technical cooperation and training, with a primary focus in the following three substantive areas:

- Institutional development in the public sector with special emphasis on leadership and human resources development, policy and strategy design, and institutional networking
- Public service delivery improvement through the application of information and communications technologies, e-government and knowledge management
- Public administration in support of the United Nations development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals.

38. During the conduct of the Seventh Global Forum on Reinventing Government, held in Vienna in June 2007, the participants were encouraged to determine whether their Governments were interested in hosting the next Global Forum. Following the Seventh Global Forum, several countries including Australia, Azerbaijan, Canada and Qatar, as well as the European Union, expressed tentative interest in hosting the Eighth Global Forum. Subsequent follow-up has not revealed a strong commitment on the part of those countries to assuming the responsibilities involved, including an adequate financial commitment of the host Government to organizing the next Global Forum.

39. In the absence of a host and owing to the scarcity of financial and human resources available to the Division for Public Administration and Development Management, it will not be able to carry out the preparations and provide support for the organization of the next Global Forum in the foreseeable future. The biennial work programme of the Division is to be adjusted accordingly.

40. It must be noted that the number of outputs planned for the biennium was decreased in order to consolidate available resources for the conduct of training events of a larger scale and to allow more resources to be allocated for preparation of high-quality outputs with a stronger impact.

41. During the biennium 2010-2011, the following final outputs will be delivered:

A. Servicing of intergovernmental/expert bodies:

1. Substantive servicing of meetings

(a) General assembly (4): panels as required by the Assembly on emerging issues in the public sector (2);

(b) Economic and Social Council (12):

(i) Panels as required by the Council on emerging trends in the public sector (2);

(ii) Meetings of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (2), including also provision of technical servicing (20 plenary meetings and 8 working group meetings);

2. Parliamentary documentation

(a) General Assembly: reports mandated by resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth and sixty-sixth sessions on "Public administration and development" (2);

(b) Economic and Social Council: report on the ninth session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (1); and report on the tenth session of the Committee (1);

(c) Ninth session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration:

(i) Analytical/working papers on selected issues (3);

(ii) Analytical/working paper on the theme of the annual ministerial review held by the Economic and Social Council (1);

(iii) Report on the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance (1);

(d) Tenth session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration:

(i) Analytical/working papers on selected issues (3);

(ii) Analytical/working paper on the theme of the annual ministerial review held by the Economic and Social Council (1);

(iii) Report on the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance (1);

3. Other services provided (ad hoc meetings of groups of experts)

Six expert group meetings, on:

(i) Improved mechanisms for online public service delivery;

(ii) Developing human resource capacities for effective delivery of public services;

(iii) Improving public service for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;

(iv) The role of government in information and communications technology for development;

(v) Public administration in the context of the thematic area to be identified for the annual ministerial review held by the Economic and Social Council in 2010;

(vi) Public administration in the context of the thematic area to be identified for the annual ministerial review held by the Economic and Social Council in 2011;

B. Other substantive activities

1. Mandated recurrent publications

(a) "Compendium of Best Practices and Innovation in Public Administration" (2);

(b) *Compendium of Innovative E-Government Practices* (1);

(c) "Compendium of ICT Applications on Electronic Government" (1);

(d) *World Public Sector Report* (1);

(e) *United Nations e-Government Survey* (1);

(f) Report on the United Nations Public Service Awards (2);

2. Mandated non-recurrent publications

(a) Report on improved mechanisms for online public service delivery;

(b) Report on developing human resource capacities for effective delivery of public services;

(c) Report on improving public service for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;

(d) Report on the role of government in ICT for development;

(e) Report on public administration in the context of the thematic area to be identified for the annual ministerial reviews held by the Economic and Social Council in 2010;

(f) Report on public administration in the context of the thematic area to be identified for the annual ministerial review held by the Economic and Social Council in 2011;

3. Special events

(a) Support to regional ministerial meetings on emerging trends in the public sector (in cooperation with the regional commissions) (2);

(b) United Nations Public Service Awards competition (in its decision 2000/231 of 27 July 2000, the Economic and Social Council endorsed the recommendation of the Group of Experts that prizes be awarded by the Secretary-General for contributions made to the cause of enhancing the role, prestige and visibility of the public service). Created to draw attention to best practices, the Awards are being given every year (2);

(c) Provision of substantive and organizational support for the observance of United Nations Public Service Day (2);

4. Technical material

(a) Maintenance and improvement of the United Nations Public Administration Network Web Portal (1);

(b) UNPAN Newsletter (8);

(c) Governance World Watch (24);

(d) Maintenance and improvement of online website: United Nations Global E-Government Readiness Knowledge Base (1);

(e) Maintenance and improvement of online website: Africa Governance Inventory (1);

(f) Public Administration Country Profiles (1);

(g) Maintenance and improvement of online website: Ethics, Transparency, and Accountability (1);

(h) Maintenance and improvement of online website: Innovation in Public Administration in the Euro-Mediterranean Region (InnovMed) (1);

(i) Maintenance and improvement of online website: Global Alliance for ICT and Development (GAID) (1);

(j) Maintenance and improvement of online website: Internet Governance Forum (IGF) (1);

(k) Maintenance and improvement of Database on Economic and Social Councils (1);

(l) Maintenance and improvement of online website: United Nations Global Knowledge Repository for Electronic/Mobile Government (EMGKR) (1);

(m) Maintenance and improvement of online database: United Nations Public Service Awards Past Initiatives (1);

(n) Maintenance and improvement of online website: Peacebuilding Portal: conflict management organizations, programmes and practitioners (1);

(o) Maintenance and improvement of online website: Global Centre for ICT in Parliament (1);

(p) Maintenance and improvement of online database: Administration and Cost of Elections (1);

5. **Audio-visual resources**

Online training courses (4);

6. **Substantive servicing of inter-agency meetings**

Support to global and regional technical meetings organized by partner institutions (5).

IV. Conclusions

42. The Committee has before it, for its consideration, the proposed activities for the period 2010-2011 under subprogramme 8, Public administration and development management, of programme 7, Economic and Social Affairs, of the biennial programme plan for the period 2010-2011 as approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/247. The Committee is invited to review the proposed programme of work and to provide its comments thereon.

43. The Division for Public Administration and Development Management is responsible for the subprogramme. The strategy in the area of public administration is based on an integrated approach linking the normative and analytical work of the subprogramme with advisory services, technical cooperation and training, focusing primarily on the following three substantive areas: (a) institutional development in the public sector, with special emphasis on leadership and human resources development, policy and strategy design, and institutional networking; (b) public service delivery improvement through the application of information and communications technology, e-government and knowledge management; and (c) engagement in public administration in support of the United Nations development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals.

44. In implementing the programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011 and beyond, the Secretariat will set its direction based on the provisions of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (see General Assembly resolution 60/1) along with the relevant provisions of Assembly resolution 61/16 of 20 November 2006 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council. It also receives guidance from the basic programme of work of the Council for 2010 and 2011 and the specific themes of the annual ministerial-level substantive reviews.

45. In an attempt to effect the streamlining of the operations of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management, which is being undertaken with a view to improving the effective and efficient delivery of mandates given to the Secretariat in the area of public administration and development management, the Secretariat proposed structural and functional adjustments to be carried out in unison with the efforts under way in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in response to the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/62/708) on the strengthening of the United Nations development pillar. The specifics of the proposed reorganization are contained in the annex to the present report, entitled "DPADM: the way forward", which will be circulated as a conference room paper.

V. Recommendations

46. The Committee is invited to comment on the activities carried out in 2008 and to make recommendations on priorities and strategic directions set for the period 2010-2011 by:

(a) Taking note of the work of the Secretariat in 2008 in implementing the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance;

(b) Taking note of the activities proposed for implementation during the biennium 2010-2011 and making any suggestions thereon;

(c) Endorsing the strategic objectives, thematic focus and adjusted structure of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management as outlined in the annex to this report entitled: "DPADM: the way forward".

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Item 6 of the provisional agenda*
Public administration perspective on implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health

Mainstreaming of health issues and human capacity-building in public administration

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

The present note by the Secretariat serves as a background paper for the deliberation and recommendations of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration on the mainstreaming of health issues and human capacity-building in public administration, in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2008/254. The annual ministerial review of the 2009 high-level segment of the Council will address progress made by Member States in this area.

The promotion, restoration and maintenance of global public health are becoming a growing challenge. While health risks such as the possibility of pandemic influenza call for cooperation among authorities around the globe, other health issues, such as primary health care, require a comprehensive and cooperative approach among all relevant partners at the local level. In examining the cases of diarrhoea, primary health care and pandemic influenza, this paper postulates that the challenges are more than medical and pharmaceutical. The sector orientation of public health is a handicap for related challenges. To overcome this, health issues need to be mainstreamed within the public sector. All institutions need to be aware of their current and potential future impact on public health and have to revise their own administrative work accordingly.

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Linked with the mainstreaming of health issues is the issue of an increasing demand for horizontal and vertical cooperation. That, in turn, requires an upgrading of skills and heightened participatory approaches among all involved. Thus, the human factor becomes even more decisive than before on the supply side of health services. In its conclusions and recommendations, the paper states that in order to cope with the increasing complexity of challenges and to better achieve the Millennium Development Goals, it is necessary to strengthen participatory approaches and to mainstream health issues at the same time. In both fields it is expected that public administration will play a key role in achieving health-related goals.

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I. The need to overcome the sector orientation of public health and to strengthen participatory approaches

1. Health is more than the absence of illness and pain. Health embraces the entire physical, mental and social well-being of a human. Because of its fundamental relevance, "the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being".[1] Aside from being a human right, health is a condition for the development of the individual and of society.

2. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health systems as all the activities whose primary purpose is to promote, restore or maintain health. Health systems that offer socially equitable and efficient basic health care strengthen social and economic development. The achievement of Millennium Development Goals such as the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger is strongly related to health. Millennium Development Goals such as that of reducing child mortality (goal 4), improving maternal health (goal 5) and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases (goal 6) are directly targeted at health as a basis for development. Little time is left until 2015 to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Particularly, the health-related goals mentioned above continue to pose daunting challenges.[2]

3. For the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, it is paramount to introduce good governance that will establish and maintain an effective health delivery system.[3] Most common visualizations of health-service delivery show doctors giving aid to children or other patients. The symbolism of such pictures is appealing, and it illustrates the point that health-service provision is about people-to-people actions. Whatever medicine or medical equipment may be used, also needed are health workers who treat each patient according to his or her individual situation and needs. The human factor is most evident in such instances. Ultimately, the delivery of health services to the patient depends on often highly sophisticated supply chains in which public institutions and administration most often play a key role.

4. This interrelation between the health sector, public governance and the human factor is demonstrated in the sections below using three examples. The first is diarrhoea, a disease that is relatively easy to intervene against, but that nevertheless kills about 2 million people each year. The second example is the case of systems for primary health care. They follow a more comprehensive approach to secure public health. The third example deals with potential public health emergencies of international concern, the most feared of which is pandemic influenza. Although very different, all three examples demonstrate that only a comprehensive and coordinated governmental policy and governance strategy can reduce risk and contribute to global public health.

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[1] Constitution of the World Health Organization.

[2] See http://www.un.org//millenniumgoals/2008highlevel/pdf/addendum.pdf.

[3] *Achieving the Health Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: Policies and Actions within Health Systems and Beyond*, United Nations publication, Sales No. E.07.II.F.19), p. 19.

A. Limitations of single-issue policies and projects: the case of diarrhoea

5. Diarrhoea currently is neither among the top threats in global public health nor a disease that requires the focus of research to identify its causes and possible interventions. However, it is relevant to global health, as it occurs worldwide and causes 4 per cent of all deaths and 5 per cent of health loss. It is most commonly caused by gastrointestinal infections and kills about 2.2 million people globally each year, mostly children in developing countries.[4] Diarrhoea is a relatively "simple" case, as the disease itself, how it affects people and the possible interventions are well known. In addition, interventions do not require large investments in research, medicine and medical equipment. In spite of these advantages, there is the need for a relatively sophisticated supply chain and coordination to reduce infections.

6. According to WHO, key measures to reduce the number of cases of diarrhoea include access to safe drinking water; improved sanitation; good personal and food hygiene; and health education about how infections spread. On an individual basis this can often be achieved by rather simple measures. From a governmental point of view, the provision of safe drinking water, improved sanitation, good hygiene and health education to all citizens is a major challenge that requires substantial planning, logistics and other administrative efforts and the availability of necessary funds. At the beginning of 2000, one sixth of the world's population (1.1 billion people) was without access to improved water supply and two fifths (2.4 billion people) lacked access to improved sanitation.[5] Efforts to improve these numbers are still far from succeeding.

7. Key measures to treat diarrhoea usually do not require costly medicine or medical equipment. What is needed is mainly information and education. Affected patients need to be informed that a salt solution to treat dehydration can prevent death or health loss. In addition, it is sufficient that a health worker be available for consultation. As simple as this may be in principle, in practice it takes major efforts by governments at all levels to ensure that information is provided to everybody throughout the country in question. The education of health workers, the financing of their salaries and necessary infrastructure are other challenges that have to be met to ensure that measures against diarrhoea become effective in every country. With an estimated 2.2 million people killed each year, it becomes apparent that the supply chain of information, consultation and affordable essential medicines is not functioning well enough.

8. To further reduce the number of cases of diarrhoea and to treat it, coordination and cooperation are needed at least among the following departments within public administration: health, sanitation, science, education, public information, human resources, infrastructure, environment, water management, statistics and finances. While the direct treatment of diarrhoea is not cost-intensive, other measures to reduce the risk of infection (e.g., better sanitation and water management) can be costly and require a greater amount of funding.

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[4] http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/diseases/diarrhoea.

[5] Global water supply and sanitation assessment report, WHO and United Nations Children's Fund, 2000.

B. More comprehensive policies: the case of people-centred primary health care

9. The case of diarrhoea has already made it apparent that further improved interventions depend on an integrated set of measures. In general, "a shift towards the need for more comprehensive thinking about the performance of the health system"[6] is recognizable in public health. To that end, the *World Health Report 2008* promotes the setting up of a system for primary health care. Its scope is people-centred and thus goes beyond conventional ambulatory medical care and disease control programmes (see table).

10. The people-centred primary-care approach brings promotion and prevention, cure and care together in a safe, effective and socially productive way at the interface between the population and the health-care system. WHO found evidence that person-centredness contributes to the quality of care and better outcomes:[7]

(a) Improved treatment intensity and quality of life;

(b) Better understanding of the psychological aspects of a patient's problem;

(c) Improved satisfaction with communication;

(d) Improved patient confidence regarding sensitive problems;

(e) Increased trust and treatment compliance;

(f) Better integration of preventive and promotive care.

Aspects of care that distinguish conventional health care from people-centred primary care[a]

Conventional ambulatory medical care in clinics or outpatient departments	*Disease control programmes*	*People-centred primary care*
Focus on illness and cure	Focus on priority diseases	Focus on health needs
Relationship limited to the moment of consultation	Relationship limited to programme implementation	Enduring personal relationship
Episodic curative care	Programme-defined disease control interventions	Comprehensive, continuous and person-centred
Responsibility limited to effective and safe advice to the patient at the moment of consultation	Responsibility for disease-control targets among the target population	Responsibility for the health of all in the community throughout the life cycle; responsibility for tackling determinants of ill health
Users are consumers of the care they purchase	Population groups are targets of disease-control interventions	People are partners in managing their own health and that of their community

[a] WHO, *World Health Report 2008*, p. 52.

[6] WHO, *World Health Report 2008*, Director-General's message.

[7] Ibid., p. 47.

11. When one looks at the administrative and managerial side of this approach, the related challenge becomes visible: each centre for primary health care should offer a comprehensive range of integrated diagnostic, curative, rehabilitative and palliative services. It needs to be ensured that these distinctive features become directly and permanently accessible, without undue reliance on out-of-pocket payments and with social protection offered by universal coverage schemes. Another set of arrangements is critical for the transformation of conventional care — ambulatory- and institution-based, generalist and specialist — into local networks of primary-care centres:[8]

(a) Bringing care closer to people, in settings in close proximity to and in direct relationship with the community, relocating the health-system entry point from hospitals and specialists to close-to-client generalist primary-care centres;

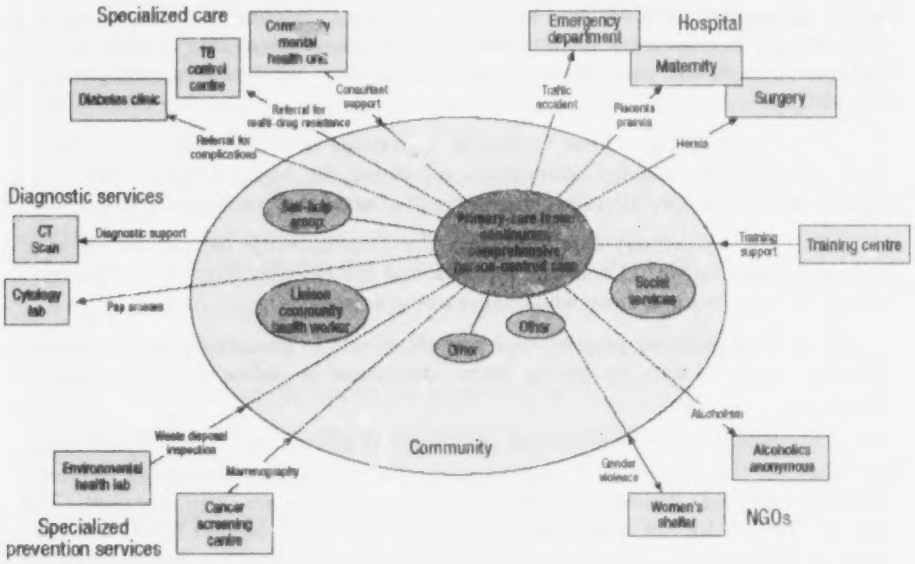
(b) Giving primary-care providers the responsibility for the health of a defined population, in its entirety: the sick and the healthy, those who choose to consult the services and those who choose not to do so;

(c) Strengthening primary-care providers' role as coordinators of the inputs of other levels of care by giving them administrative authority and purchasing power.

12. This brings many changes and challenges to health-care workers and teams, but also to the people and communities. Support from specialized services, organizations and institutions outside the community are also required. The coordination of this set transforms the primary-care pyramid into a network. The relations between the primary-care team and the other institutions and services are no longer based only on top-down hierarchy and bottom-up referral, but on cooperation and coordination. Thus, primary care becomes a hub of coordination (see figure 1).

[8] Ibid., p. 55.

Figure 1
Primary care as a hub of coordination: networking within the community served and with outside partners[a]



[a] WHO, *World Health Report 2008*, p. 55.

13. The coordination function provides the institutional framework for mobilizing across sectors to secure the health of local communities. WHO regards this not as an optional extra but as an essential part of the remit of primary-care teams, and sees also the policy implications:

> coordination will remain wishful thinking unless the primary-care team has some form of either administrative or financial leverage. Coordination also depends on the different institutions' recognition of the key role of the primary-care teams. Current professional education systems, career structure and remuneration mechanisms most often give signals to the contrary. Reversing these well-entrenched disincentives to primary care requires strong leadership.[9]

14. At this point WHO ends its analysis of the institutional setting for primary health care. In the wider context of public administration and governance, the analysis must be extended, because the system for primary health is not a closed shop or system on its own. As a people-centred system it involves the entire community, and because of its administrative and financial requirements it is closely linked to other parts of the public sector. The purpose of health-related good governance is to establish and maintain an effective health delivery system, but considering the

[9] Ibid., p. 57.

challenges for the administration described in the case of diarrhoea, and especially with regard to primary public health, it is inevitable that related developments have an impact on the entire setting of public administration and governance.

15. For example, it is not enough that health workers tell parents to provide their children with healthy food. It is important that public health issues be integrated into the curriculum of schools. The government may also need to formulate media policy banning or restricting the advertisement of certain kinds of products that have adverse health effects. Similarly, the media should encourage the promotion of healthy lifestyles and create awareness of wider public health issues, such as the need to vaccinate children. Thus, the departments (ministries) of education and media also become partners in the provision of primary health care. Other government departments, such as public works, sanitation and water supply, may also have supporting roles. By all such interrelations and synergies, health turns into an issue of horizontal relevance for public administration and governance.

C. Interdependency of national health systems: the case of pandemic influenza

16. Interventions against a disease such as diarrhoea are possible at any time, and efforts to set up systems for primary health care can also be taken, but how to respond to future threats of global health is a more complex issue. Infectious diseases are spreading faster and appear to be emerging more quickly than ever before. Since the 1970s, newly emerging diseases have been identified at an unprecedented rate of one or more per year. High mobility and an interdependent and interconnected world provide myriad opportunities for the rapid spread of infectious diseases and radionuclear and toxic threats. About 2 billion passengers travel on airlines each year, which makes it possible for an outbreak or epidemic in any one part of the world to be only a few hours away from becoming an imminent threat somewhere else. That these threats are real has become apparent over the years. From September 2003 to 2006, WHO verified more than 1,100 epidemic events worldwide, and it would be extremely naïve and complacent to assume that there will not be another disease like AIDS, Ebola or SARS sooner or later.[10]

17. In 1996 WHO initiated a global system of epidemic alert and response to compensate for gaps in the health systems of many countries. The public health security of all countries depends on the capacity of each country to act effectively and contribute to the security of all. According to WHO, the first steps that must be taken towards global public health security, therefore, are to develop core detection and response capacities in all countries and to maintain new levels of cooperation between countries to reduce the risks to public health security. This entails countries' strengthening their health systems and ensuring that they have the capacity to prevent and control epidemics that can quickly spread across borders and even across continents. Where countries are unable to achieve prevention and control by themselves, it means providing rapid, expert international disease surveillance and response networks to assist them – and making sure these mesh together into an efficient safety net.[11]

[10] WHO, *World Health Report 2007*, pp. x-xiii.

[11] Ibid., p. xiii.

18. For governance strategies, one main challenge of global public health emergencies is that they have to be internationally open and integrated. The message of the WHO report with respect to governance strategies is clear:

> No single country — however capable, wealthy or technologically advanced — can alone prevent, detect and respond to all public health threats. Emerging threats may be unseen from a national perspective, may require a global analysis for proper risk assessment, or may necessitate effective coordination at the international level.[12]

Knowledge has to be exchanged, and agreed standards for surveillance have to be applied. The second challenge is that countries have to be ready to react fast in the case of an outbreak of a pandemic influenza. They have to strengthen their health systems and ensure that they have the capacity to prevent and control epidemics that can quickly spread.

19. The first remarkable steps towards coordination of the international level have been taken. Most outstanding are the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005), which came into force in June 2007. These Regulations are an internationally and legally binding agreement designed to achieve maximum security against the international spread of diseases. Nonetheless, the Regulations themselves do not stop the trend that brought more than 1,100 epidemic events worldwide between September 2003 and 2006. Actions against bird flu or SARS require the willingness to change. Considering the many challenges for politics and administration (including the current financial crises), the effectiveness of the coordination of health and other policy priorities at the international, national and regional/local levels needs to be proved anew in the case of each epidemic event.

D. Obstacles preventing better health delivery systems

20. Many obstacles hinder the achievement of the overall objective of public health, and most of them have been mentioned in the context of the examples described above. In striving for a more comprehensive and coordinated approach, it is necessary to look also at the obstacles in a more coherent way. To do this, the analysed examples were revisited and, in addition relevant publications[13] were evaluated. This led to a list of obstacles differentiated according to obstacles classified as being either within or outside traditional health systems.

1. Obstacles within health systems

21. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), in their study on the achievement of health-related Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific,[14] speak about three types of deficiencies within health systems:

(a) Deficiencies in physical infrastructure;

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[12] Ibid., p. xxii.

[13] *World Health Report, 2006, 2007 and 2008* and *Achieving the Health Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific*, op. cit.

[14] *Achieving the Health Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific*, op. cit.

(b) Deficiencies in human resources;

(c) Deficiencies in access to essential and reliable medicines and vaccines.

22. These deficiencies weaken the ability of health systems to deliver good-quality health-care services. At a lower level, they are in turn determined by a wide range of interrelated factors:

(a) Insufficient spending;

(b) Undeveloped health-protection systems;

(c) Inequitable allocations of health budgets;

(d) Poor working conditions, professional prospects and work ethics;

(e) Poor governance and low efficiency in health systems;

(f) Weak health-information systems;

(g) Low capacity at the local level in decentralized health systems.

2. Obstacles outside health systems

23. The fight against a single disease, efforts to set up systems for primary health care and activities to prevent and react to epidemic events all go far beyond the inner circle of health workers, their institutions and activities. In addition, increasingly, public health in one country depends on actions taken in other countries.

24. The obstacles outside health systems include especially the following:

(a) Socio-economic determinants;

(i) Poverty and hunger;

(ii) Education and health literacy;

(iii) Gender inequality;

(iv) Exclusion, stigmatization and discrimination;

(b) Environmental demands;

(i) Water and sanitation;

(ii) Air and pollution;

(iii) Food quality;

(c) Determinants associated with international economic regimes;

(i) Skewed research and development;

(ii) Trade agreements and the production and trade of generic drugs.

3. The obstacle of uncoordinated actions

25. In addition to the obstacles listed above, the lack of coordination constitutes a horizontal obstacle with an impact on all other obstacles. Fragmented actions on single issues often promise faster progress than coordinated efforts on complex issues. Apparently, not even diarrhoea can be prevented this way. Unfortunately,

addressing complex challenges by means of fragmented actions turns the achievement of health objectives into a matter of chance. In addition, it is more likely that available funds will not be used in the most economical way to reduce health risks. Be it primary health care or the prevention of pandemic events, uncoordinated policies and activities are an approach that is not only too risky but also too costly. Coordination requires more efforts and funds to get started, but it can be expected that synergies and other advantages of better coordination reduce both health risks and expenditures for public health in the long run.

II. Towards a wider and more comprehensive understanding of public health systems

26. It is interesting to note that in their study, ESCAP, UNDP and ADB address the issue of the institutional changes required to implement policies more effectively within and outside the health sector, in order to deliver health services in an equitable and efficient manner. Consequently, they underline in their report the interconnectedness among determinants within and outside the health sector. For example, it is stated that poverty (one of the outside determinants) is at the root of the lack of progress towards achieving the health-related Millennium Development Goals, and is also a consequence of ill health. This differentiation between within and outside may be traditional and common, but it is neither convincing nor does it help to achieve the objectives of health policies.

A. The domain of public health: observations from an actor-centred point of view

27. According to WHO, health systems comprise "all the activities whose primary purpose is to promote, restore or maintain health".[15] The wording indicates that the division between within and outside depends on the definition of the term "primary purpose". Doctors, nurses, medicines and hospitals indeed share this primary purpose, but this is not sufficient as evidence. The budget policy of Governments has also a strong impact on what happens with respect to public health, but it would be wrong to state that health is the primary purpose of budget policy. In China almost 13,000 children became sickened by tainted milk. This was a case of the work ethics of a producer of milk powder having an adverse impact on health, but it certainly cannot be said that health was the producer's primary purpose. In a similar way, many other policies and orientations of various actor groups have an impact on health without having this as a primary purpose. This leads to the assumption that the traditional understanding of a health sector and its health systems is too narrow.

28. At this point it is useful to look at public health from a different and theoretical point of view that is not encompassed in the traditional view of the health sector. For the present paper, the perspective of actor-centred institutionalism was chosen. This approach, developed by Renate Mayntz and Fritz Scharpf,[16] is not

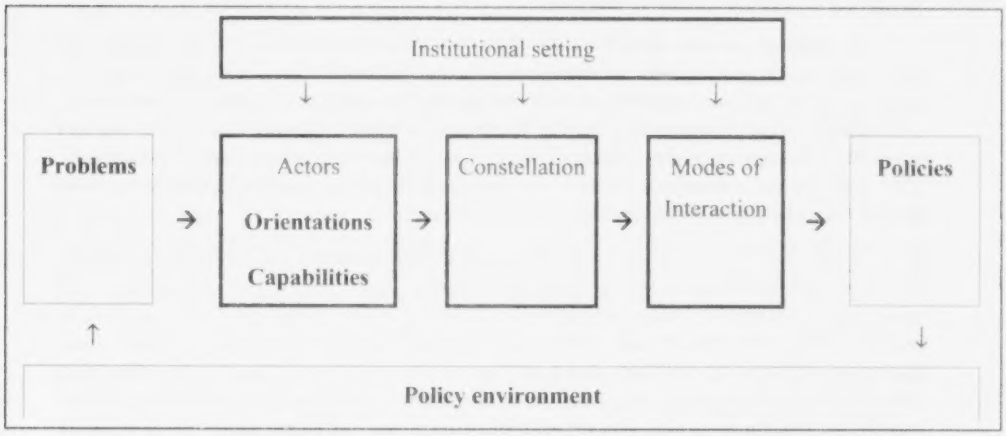
[15] WHO, *World Health Report 2000*, p. 5.

[16] Scharpf, Fritz, *Games Real Actors Play: Actor-Centered Institutionalism in Policy Research* (Westview Press, Boulder, United States of America, and Oxford, United Kingdom, 1997).

a theory per se. Rather, it is a theory-based model for analysis allowing as much the analysis of systemic as of individual aspects of policy developments. With respect to the policy field of public health, this means that the constellation of the main actors in the field is not to be seen as a static picture. Instead, it is important to look at the actors, their orientations and their capabilities, and to analyse their modes of interaction in the given institutional setting. Without a focus on interactions, it seems unlikely that it will be possible to come to conclusions related to the human factor and the building of capacities in the context of health systems and public administration.

29. An outline of the domain of interaction-oriented policy research is given in figure II. Terms such as "system" and "sector" are not used in this domain. Rather, research starts with problems (e.g., health risks) and looks at the process for formulating and implementing related policies (e.g., deciding upon and implementing measures to reduce health risks by providing health services).

Figure II
The domain of interaction-oriented policy research[a]



[a] Scharpf, op. cit., p. 44.

30. The next box in figure II refers to actors: individual and corporate actors. In striving to achieve health-related Millennium Development Goals, much depends on well-trained and motivated individual actors such as health workers, corporate actors such as ministries of health and collective actors (e.g., associations of doctors or of members of the pharmaceutical industry). These actors all have specific action orientations, i.e., their own perceptions of a problem and their own preferred actions. This is also the point where ethical orientations come into play. Orientations may be stable, or they may be changeable through learning and persuasion. They will be activated and defined by the stimulus provided by a particular policy problem or issue.

31. WHO dedicated the *World Health Report 2006* to the development of health workers as a central group of actors in the domain of public e-health. In spite of its concern for the health worker, WHO goes beyond this actor group and features in

the same report a wider constellation of actors, including national Governments and financial institutions. Nonetheless, to get the full picture of all relevant actors and their constellation it is necessary to include all those (non-partners) who are not concerned about public health but who have an impact on public health by their own activities (e.g., military conflicts, environmental pollution, directing funds to uses other than public health, etc.).

32. Thus, on the supply side of health services, actors comprise health workers, ministries of health, WHO and all other movements, associations and organizations dealing with health. In addition, the departments in charge of food, environment, sanitation, education and budget carry out health-related actions. Most of these actors are non-primary in striving to promote, restore or maintain health, but without them no health systems would function. Public administration in this context is a corporate actor, but its employees are also individual actors. As an institution and as individuals, they require understanding about the impact of their actions on health-related issues. The absence of coordinated mainstreaming may lead to horizontal conflict (between employees of different departments) and vertical conflict (between employees of the same organization — the principal-agent relationship). Therefore, it is essential that relevant actors have the capabilities necessary to cope with such challenges.

33. In addition to the supply side there is the demand side: it is always the individual person (potentially everybody) who is suffering a disease, receiving services from primary health care or being threatened by a pandemic influenza. Individuals cover or contribute to the financing of health services, and, last but not least, their health situation affects how they contribute to the economy and society. They and the organizations of civil society have an impact on the development and deliveries of health services within a community.

34. In this full constellation of actors, public administration most likely will have different and sometimes conflicting perceptions and preferences. Ministries and other public offices in charge of public health have a clear mandate favouring public health, while foreign offices and ministries of defence or finance have other priorities. As a matter of fact, most public institutions do not have a mandate that includes public health as one of the priorities. Public health may just not be on their screen, and their potential and/or real impact on activities to promote, restore or maintain health has to be analysed. Especially where health interests are in conflict with other (e.g., budgetary/financial) interests, it easily may be the case that public authorities with a mandate for balancing the budget and those with a mandate for public health have contradictory preferences. In such cases, the efforts of a public administration to promote, restore or maintain health may be weakened or even made ineffective by activities of other actors from the public sector.

35. To prevent this situation it is necessary that governments at all levels develop an integrated health policy, i.e., a health policy coordinated with all other policies that have a direct or indirect impact on public health and the delivery of health services. This would make it possible, for example, for investments in public health and school feeding programmes eventually to be beneficial for the budget as they reduce the cost of expensive treatments, etc.

36. Next to the development of an integrated health policy is the development and implementation of a related governance strategy. At this point, public administrations must look not only at the problems to be solved, the actors

concerned and the actor constellation, but also at the modes of interaction between actors. A country — in the perspective of actor-centred institutionalism — is no single actor, but a specific actor constellation in a defined territory. As discussed above, even within public administration (not to mention the many private actors) different perceptions and preferences might prevail. Needed are governance strategies that are able to coordinate interactions within countries and at the international level. Interaction modes include hierarchical directions, unilateral actions, negotiated agreements and majority vote. Actors have to always be aware of what the possible and appropriate modes of interaction to achieve commonly agreed objectives are.

B. Mainstreaming public health issues and human capacity-building while reducing complexity

37. A common slogan in the 1980s was "Think globally, act locally". It was an effort to give an answer to increasing global interrelations and to the parallel requirement that each individual has to find a way to handle growing complexity and his or her own limitations. In view of the approach of actor-centred institutionalism, it may seem as if now an even greater complexity has to be faced. It is true that interrelations grow and that each individual and institution has to be aware of this, but it would be wrong to assume that to make rational choices each actor would have to have full information about not only health but all policies in the world and their possible interrelations and impacts on one another. This certainly would overwhelm everybody. In the same way it would not be promising to set up a kind of centralized health authority replacing individual efforts with a central and top-down approach. Firstly, it is unlikely that such an authority would be able to collate full information, and secondly, it is unlikely that a centralized authority could take all appropriate actions in the appropriate way to promote, restore and maintain health at any given time everywhere in the world.

38. If it is not possible to get everybody directly involved in everything and to centralize all information and decision-making, how could it be possible for actors in public health to face the entire complexity of the domain as it is in reality? The way to cope with this challenge might be found through a combination of two activities: awareness-raising and loose coupling of arenas.

1. Awareness-raising, training and education

39. Firstly, all actors both directly and indirectly involved in public health and health delivery systems have to be aware of the fact that in the twenty-first century public health is a global challenge and that actions taken by an actor in one country have an impact on health in another country. To be aware of the principle of interconnectedness is more important than to strive for full information on all issues by everybody.

40. Secondly, all individuals and corporate actors have to be aware of their own specific positions and opportunities with respect to health. This comprises awareness of one's own personal health and its impacts on the environment, but also the awareness of institutions on their direct or indirect impact. As in the case of gender mainstreaming, it is also necessary in the case of health mainstreaming that all institutions reflect on their relationship to public health and evaluate areas where

they do not support, and may even impede, the promotion, restoration or maintenance of health.

41. Thirdly, increased awareness must lead to revised training of health workers and other relevant employees across public administration. In addition the increased awareness of experts should be incorporated into education curricula at schools, and also into training programmes for leadership-building in public administration. In this way the mainstreaming of health issues and human capacity-building becomes integrated and can be of mutual benefit.

2. Loose coupling

42. The pattern of loose coupling[17] was developed in organizational science and is understood as an instrument to avoid the joint decision trap. The risk of joint decision traps always exists where interests and competences of actors and arenas overlap and interfere. Of course, in the domain of public health this risk is extremely high: one of the most prominent risks is the overlap between horizontal policies (e.g., budget) and vertical policies (e.g., health). The lack of mutual understanding between health authorities and other departments may lead to insufficient resourcing. Other examples are the shared health-related competences of national, regional and/or local authorities. If actions in one area depend on actions in another arena, the demand for coordination to prevent blockages grows tremendously.

43. Organizing public health according to the pattern of loose coupling would allow assigning decision-making competences in the context (or arena) where they are most appropriate. Doctors would still decide about medication for their patients, Governments would decide about national health policies and international organizations would carry out their tasks in the framework of their mandates. The link between the actors in their specific context would be "loose" insofar as decisions in one arena would not always be binding for actors in other arenas. The point is that today many actors are not at all linked. If public institutions do not know the potential and practical impacts of their activities on health, then there is no coupling at all. This would be different if all public institutions were aware of their possible and real impacts. In addition, it might be helpful if all actors would get guidance (be it from other authorities, from the public or from self-defined principles). The coupling should be loose enough to protect the autonomy of actors and to allow independent and decentralized actions. At the same time, it should be strong enough to allow for efficient decision-making and implementation of integrated actions.

44. What awareness-raising and loose coupling mean for public administration needs to be analysed and defined on a case-by-case basis. Certainly, it seems to be appropriate for the entire public sector to undergo a screening regarding its direct and indirect impact on public health, and its possible and effective contribution to promoting, restoring and maintaining health delivery systems. It is to be expected that at the end of this process there will be a much broader and differentiated picture of health systems. Individuals and institutions within the traditional health sector will better understand their role in relation to those outside. More challenging probably will be the difference for those who currently consider themselves to be

[17] Weick, Karl E., *Der Prozeß des Organisierens* (Suhrkamp, Frankfurt, 1995).

outside of the health system. Many of them are likely to find themselves suddenly part of the wider health system, and this could be the starting point for a fruitful dialogue, better coordination and the development of more effective and efficient health delivery systems.

III. Overcoming the silo mentality

45. On 24 October 2008, the Office for Economic and Social Council Support and Coordination of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs held a panel discussion on the theme "Globalization and health" in New York. On that occasion, the WHO Director-General mentioned in her presentation that "the silo mentality" is a major problem. The discussion of insufficient cross-sector coordination of health issues in sections I and II above confirmed the WHO position and went a step further by analysing the subject in the wider context of public administration. The aim of the present section is to give examples of what can be done or what has already been done to overcome related deficiencies. The examples cannot give a full picture of developments already under way. Nonetheless, they give a clear indication that improved coordination and cooperation beyond the traditional borders of health policy and services is possible and that a number of activities have already begun.

A. Traditional medicine as part of health systems

46. Countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America use traditional medicine to help meet some of their primary health-care needs. In Africa, up to 80 per cent of the population uses traditional medicine for primary health care. In industrialized countries, adaptations of traditional medicine are termed "complementary" or "alternative". Traditional medicine has maintained its popularity in all regions of the developing world and its use is rapidly spreading in industrialized countries:[18]

(a) In China, traditional herbal preparations account for 30 to 50 per cent of the total medicinal consumption;

(b) In Ghana, Mali, Nigeria and Zambia, the first line of treatment for 60 per cent of children with high fever resulting from malaria is the use of herbal medicines at home;

(c) WHO estimates that in several African countries traditional birth attendants assist in the majority of births;

(d) In Europe, North America and other industrialized regions, over 50 per cent of the population has used complementary or alternative medicine at least once;

(e) In Canada, 70 per cent of the population has used complementary medicine at least once;

(f) In Germany, 90 per cent of the population has used a natural remedy at some point;

[18] http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs134.

(g) In the United States of America, 158 million adults use complementary medicines, and according to the United States Commission on Complementary and Alternative Medicine Policy, $17 billion was spent on traditional remedies in 2000;

(h) The global market for herbal medicines currently stands at over $60 billion annually and is growing steadily. Seventy countries have national regulations on herbal medicines, but the legislative control of medicinal plants has not evolved around a structured model;

(i) China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea and Viet Nam have fully integrated traditional medicine into their health-care systems, but many countries have yet to collect and integrate standardized evidence on this type of health care.

47. These examples demonstrate two things: firstly, the understanding of medicine itself is widening. Secondly, people matter not only as recipients but also by expressing their demand. This is another proof of the need to revise the understanding of the health system and the specific role of the different actors within the system.

B. Coordination and harmonization of national policies at the international level

48. The linkage between health issues and development aid is of great importance for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals. The Paris Declaration,[19] endorsed on 2 March 2005, lays down a practical, action-oriented road map including indicators, to improve the quality of aid and its impact on development. The achievement of the indicators is measurable because they were agreed together with targets to be achieved by 2010. Owing to the relevance of this agreement, particularly for the health-related Millennium Development Goals of reducing child mortality, improving maternal mortality and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, the Paris Declaration is a major step forward towards better coordinated horizontal and vertical cooperation.

49. The Paris Declaration includes a strategy for governance, according to which partner countries and donors recognize the need for commitments. Both sides make commitments, although the Declaration also states in paragraph 13 "that commitments need to be interpreted in the light of the specific situation of each partner country". Although this does not constitute an exit option, it may limit the effectiveness of the Declaration by leaving its interpretation largely up to national Governments. For example, the outbreak of a pandemic event could be helped along if a single country decided to postpone preventive measures owing to the "specific situation" of that country.

C. Mainstreaming health issues within national foreign policies

50. While the relation between health and the efficiency of aid management has already been on the agenda for many years, consideration of this issue has begun only recently. In March 2007 the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Brazil, France,

[19] http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/11/41/34428351.pdf.

Indonesia, Norway, Senegal, South Africa and Thailand adopted in Oslo a declaration entitled "Foreign policy taking up the challenges of global health: agenda for action". They recognized that "no country can isolate itself from cross-border risks and threats to [its] national health security". By introducing the term "global health security" they established a linkage between health and the foreign affairs objective of national security. The understanding of the adopting Ministers was that "Foreign policy actions in security, trade, conflict and crisis, environment, and human rights have a strong bearing on whether we can achieve national as well as global health security". They considered the most effective responses to global health challenges to be alliances, cooperation and partnerships. They underlined, in the same vein as the Paris Declaration, that such efforts have to be transparent, trustworthy, accountable and fair.

51. The Foreign Ministers identified areas where the kinds of policy positions they adopt can make a significant difference. Their agenda has three main themes, and for each of them they have specified actions. In looking at the list, it is most interesting how many different cross-sector issues emerge in the context of where the work of foreign offices can make a significant difference to prospects of global health:

Capacity for global health security

(1) Preparedness and foreign policy

(2) Control of emerging infectious diseases and foreign policy

(3) Human resources for health and foreign policy

Facing threats to global health security

(4) Conflict (before, during and after conflict and as peace is being built)

(5) Natural disasters and other crises

(6) Response to HIV/AIDS

(7) Health and the environment

Making globalization work for all

(8) Health and development

(9) Trade policies and measures to implement and monitor agreements

(10) Governance for global health security

Mainstreaming health issues as part of public sector reform in Mozambique

The public sector reform project known as UTRESP was implemented from 2003 to the end of 2006 with the support of UNDP and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat. It covered a wide range of activities. Under the heading "Support for HIV/AIDS and gender" it supported the mainstreaming not only of gender policies but also of HIV/AIDS prevention and management policies. One of the findings was that the mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS and gender is critical in the public sector and that it should be considered an important cross-cutting strategy in all public sector reform initiatives where relevant. The example demonstrates that the combined view of health risks (here HIV/AIDS) and other policies (here gender policies) is already in practice in public sector reform in Member States. For both types of policies it is instructive that mainstreaming is considered necessary and possible.

Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs project MOZ/01/015.

D. Information and communications technology and e-governance

1. E-health

52. The need to develop and organize new ways of providing efficient health-care services has resulted in a dramatic increase in the use of information and communications technology (ICT) applications in health care, collectively known as e-health or telemedicine. E-health is the use, in the health sector, of digital data — transmitted, stored and retrieved electronically — in support of health care, both at the local site and at a distance. Today the integration and assimilation of e-health into the everyday life of health-care workers is becoming a reality in developing as well as developed countries. One of the open questions is whether activities in e-health would divert precious resources away from basic needs in poor countries in want of everything.

53. Today, e-health can support the different functions of the health system, providing a unique opportunity for strengthening its information, intelligence and knowledge processes. Of course, it also allows for an easier promotion of alternative or traditional medicines. In addition, ICT facilitates interlinking between health authorities, other departments and the public. According to WHO, e-health should be an essential component of any plans and strategies for health-system reform in the twenty-first century. Developing countries' needs include capacity-building and the ICT training of public servants.

2. Platforms for information, dialogue and training

54. To further networking and exchange of information, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs provides a set of tools. The United Nations Public

Administration Network (UNPAN) is a central online portal.[20] It is designed to help countries, especially developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to respond to the challenges that Governments face in bridging the digital divide between the haves and the have-nots and to achieve their development goals. In short, the mission of UNPAN is to promote the sharing of knowledge, experiences and best practices throughout the world by means of ICT, sound public policies, effective public administration and efficient civil services, and through capacity-building and cooperation among Member States.

55. UNPAN provides news on public governance from all parts of the world, as well as online training opportunities. In addition, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs carries out surveys on e-government and publishes the results. The 2008 Global E-government Survey[21] assessed the same number of functionalities of the same or similar sites in each country to ensure consistency. In keeping with its conceptual framework of human development, these are the ministries/departments of health, education, social welfare, labour and finance, which are representative of the government services citizens require most. Each ministerial site was assessed on the basis of the same set of questions.

56. The Global Alliance for Information and Communication Technologies and Development[22] provides a global forum that comprehensively addresses cross-cutting issues related to ICT in development. Health is one of the focus areas.

57. The WHO programme on e-health is aimed at supporting countries in further developing their health systems by improving access, quality and efficiency through the use of ICT. The programme's main objectives are:

(a) To support Member States in identifying the most suitable applications, considering country needs, objectives and context;

(b) To facilitate the development of ethical and legal policies related to the collection, storage and use of health information in order to ensure privacy and confidentiality;

(c) To facilitate the sharing of best practices among Member States;

(d) To support the implementation of technical programmes in countries, providing information on opportunities and risks.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

58. The present paper does not argue that sector and vertical actions have been without success, but it demonstrates that global public health depends increasingly on the interrelations and cooperation between policies and across sectors. Traditional health institutions do not lose relevance. On the contrary, they are gaining importance, e.g., by becoming network hubs. Nonetheless, in order to promote, restore and maintain public health, awareness is necessary among all institutions, and especially within public administrations. They have to become

[20] http://www.unpan.org.

[21] http://www.unpan.org/Library/MajorPublications/UNEGovernmentSurvey/tabid/646/Default.aspx.

[22] United Nations, *Foundations of the Global Alliance for ICT and Development*, 2007. See also http://www.un-gaid.org.

aware of their current and potential future impact on public health and the delivery of health services. This increased awareness could be the starting point for better coordination and the development of more effective and efficient health delivery systems.

59. Increased cooperation requires cooperative approaches, and with respect to the public this means participatory approaches of governance. Private and public actors have to intensify their interrelations. Private actors have to give support and accompany public efforts, but it is the public actors that have to act as stewards. This does not mean that the people should not be key players. People are subject to health risks and they need health services. Therefore, it is evident that participatory approaches have to be applied.

60. **The following recommendations are put forth to Member States:**

(a) **Raise awareness in all sectors and at all levels of government regarding their respective responsibilities and opportunities to promote, restore and maintain public health and to provide health delivery services;**

(b) **Develop an integrated health policy, i.e., a health policy coordinated with all other policies that have direct or indirect impacts on public health and the delivery of health services;**

(c) **Adopt participatory and actor-centred approaches to developing national health policies. Tools to be used for an appropriate involvement should include ICT tools for governance;**

(d) **Enhance cross-sector cooperation and management as an integrated part of public administration. Health workers and other employees of public institutions need to be trained accordingly;**

(e) **Strengthen public administration's contribution to health information systems, e.g., through their statistical offices, but also by providing user-friendly websites and by making e-health an essential component of any plans and strategies for health-system reform;**

(f) **Be internationally open and integrated. As part of this global public health effort, the preparedness and response systems (prevention and monitoring of infectious diseases) have to be further developed;**

(g) **Promote long-term funding, including public-private partnerships where appropriate, for research on and development of new drugs and treatments. Considering that public health is not only costly but also essential for the development of the economy and society, Member States have to consider increasing investments in public health and viewing them as investments in the economic and social development of the country;**

(h) **Involve civil society organizations to enhance awareness of health issues among different stakeholders and public service providers.**

61. **The following recommendations are put forth to United Nations agencies:**

(a) **The United Nations agencies concerned should continue to assist Member States in promoting, restoring and maintaining public health and in providing health delivery services;**

(b) The United Nations agencies concerned should continue their analyses of horizontal and vertical coordination of policies with the aim of providing assistance to Member States in developing integrated national policies;

(c) Developing ICT-based tools for information on and monitoring of health delivery systems is a valuable contribution by the United Nations agencies concerned and should be further developed, including the analysis of the threats and opportunities and the strengths and weaknesses linked to the various governance tools, especially those used in the context of e-governance and e-health;

(d) Last but not least, the research activities of the United Nations agencies concerned in the health sector should include actor-centred approaches, while their advisory work should be conducted taking into consideration participatory approaches for health-sector governance.